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5 Cents.

FAME AND FORTUNE

STORIES
OF
BOYS

WEEKLY.

WHO MAKE
MONEY.

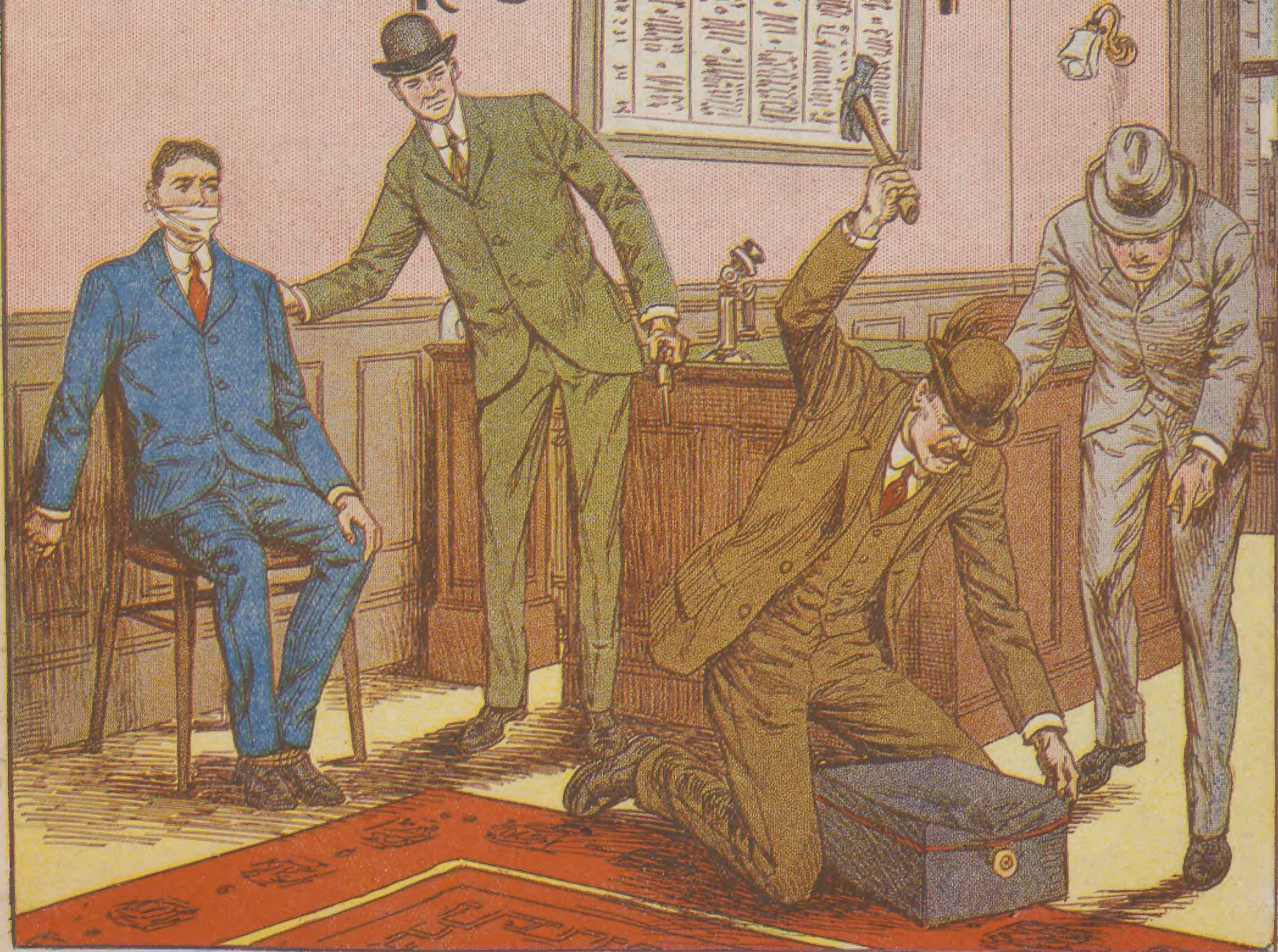
The Young Banker

OR THE MYSTERY OF A MONEY BOX

AND
OTHER STORIES

A STORY OF WALL STREET

By A
Self-Made Man



While the three crooks were intent upon the money box, Harry, bound to the chair and gagged, reached behind with his free hand and pressed the signal button on the wall. His friend in the next office heard the alarm, and hurried to find out why he had been called.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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Price 5 Cents.

THE YOUNG BANKER

—OR—

THE MYSTERY OF A MONEY-BOX

(A STORY OF WALL STREET)

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.

HARRY HAZEL AND THE REV. MR. SLEEK.

"Home—home at last!" cried Harry Hazel, with a thrill of delight, as he rang the front door-bell of the paternal mansion—a small, three-story brownstone house in Harlem, New York City—one pleasant evening early in the fall.

Why shouldn't he be happy?

He had been absent six months on a sea voyage for his health in the tropics, after a grueling finish at the academy where he was preparing for college, and now he was back again, thoroughly restored in a physical standpoint, and eager to take part in the next act of life's drama.

His cruise had not been altogether uneventful, for the yacht on which he had been a guest was wrecked on a Caribbean key, or small, uninhabited island, and for three months he, the only survivor, was marooned like an ant on a stone surrounded by water.

He had to support life as best he could on a meager diet of shell-fish, cocoanuts, and an occasional seabird he managed to bring down with a stone, and cook in a primitive way over a fire of driftwood which he ignited by means of a small magnifying glass.

He was rescued at last by a native craft engaged in the turtle-catching business, and carried to a port where he secured passage on a fruit steamer to New York.

The steamer passed Sandy Hook late that afternoon, got through quarantine, and Harry hurried ashore as soon as he could, and rushed uptown on an elevated train.

The unlucky yacht had been duly reported lost in the New York newspapers by one of her crew picked up at sea half dead, and who shortly afterward died in a hospital, but Harry was ignorant of that.

He did not doubt that his father was greatly worried over the lack of news concerning the vessel, which should have reached port ten weeks since.

The old saying that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick" no doubt was realized by his widowed father, for he (Harry) was the only chip left of the old block, but what mattered that now that he was kicking his heels on the stoop ready to rush into the old man's arms as soon as the door was opened, with the gleeful shout of a schoolboy released from his studies on the eve of the long vacation?

The door opened, but a strange man servant stood in the opening and looked at him inquiringly.

"Hello!" cried Harry. "Who are you?"

He had expected to be welcomed by Lizzie, the maid, with whom he was a great favorite.

"Sir!" replied the man, in a dignified way and a displeased look.

"Are you a new servant? Where's Lizzie?"

"Hexcuse me, young man. I don't understand your remark. 'Ave you called to see the Rev. Mr. Sleek?"

"The Rev. Mr. Sleek? I should say not. I don't know the gentleman."

"Then you 'ave come to the wrong 'ouse."

Harry looked up at the number over the door, wondering if he had really rung the wrong door-bell in his hurry and excitement, for the house was one of a row of dwellings all of which were as much alike as one pea is to another.

No. The number was the right one.

He had not made any mistake.

"No, I haven't. This is where I live."

"Where you live!" ejaculated the man, opening his eyes, for the boy he had never seen before. "Hexcuse me. I 'aven't the honor of knowing you. Maybe it's the next 'ouse you are looking for."

"Ridiculous!" cried Harry, impatiently. "This is my father's house, and I live here. Step aside and let me enter."

"The Rev. Mr. Sleek 'asn't any family. 'E's been living 'ere alone hever since the death of the late lamented Mr. 'Azal, the Wall Street banker."

"What!" cried Harry, his face growing as white as a sheet. "My father—dead! Good heavens, you can't mean that!"

He would have fallen against the servant had he not grasped the side of the door, where he swayed like a tree in a high wind.

The astonished man stared at him in wonder.

He had heard that the late banker had a son who was understood to have been lost on the ill-fated yacht Rosalie a few weeks since.

It was the shock of the boy's presumed death which had been too much for George Hazel, whose heart was weak, and the news had killed him.

"It cawn't be that you're 'Arry 'Azal, who was lost at sea about three months ago?" ejaculated the servant.

"I'm Harry Hazel. If I was lost at sea I wouldn't be here now. But my father——" said the boy in a broken voice.

"Step hinside, young man. It's hevident you hought to see the Rev. Mr. Sleek. If you are 'Arry 'Azal, 'e will be greatly surprised to see you. You will find 'im hin your late father's

library hupstairs, which you know where it is I'll be bound. But perhaps I 'ad better carry the news of your hunexpected return to 'im so 'e will be prepared for the meeting. When a chap is dead and comes to life hoff a sudden, it is apt to give one a shock, don't you know, if you see 'im vithout a varning of what is coming," said the servant.

He led the way upstairs, and Harry followed like one in the throes of an unexpected dream.

He could not realize that his father was dead.

It did not seem such terrible news could be true.

"Wait 'ere, Mr. 'Azel, till I break the news to the Rev. Mr. Sleek."

He knocked, and was told to enter.

"What a surprise this will be to the marster of the 'ouse," thought the servant as he walked in and closed the door after him.

"Well, Atkins, what is it?" said the tall, sanctimonious-looking personage clad in solemn black, with a band of crape about his arm, who sat writing at the desk by the window overlooking the back yard.

"I awsk your pawdon, Mr. Sleek, for intruding upon you, but something vonderful 'as 'appened."

"Indeed. Might I ask what it is?" said the reverend gentleman, curiously.

"I can 'ardly credit it myself, sir."

"What can you hardly credit?"

"Dead people coming to life, sir, in the most hunexpected way."

"Who do you refer to?"

"The late Mr. 'Azel's son 'Arry, sir."

"What!" cried Mr. Sleek, half rising in his chair. "What do you mean? The boy was lost at sea three months ago. The fact is undoubted. The loss of the yacht and all aboard was reported by the only eye-witness."

"So I 'ave 'eard, sir, but there must 'ave been some mistake."

"What makes you think so?"

"Because a boy who calls 'imself 'Arry 'Azel 'as just called, sir. 'E's houtside the door now. I took the liberty to bring 'im hup because 'e insisted on coming hin—said it was 'is father's 'ouse, don't you know—and I thought you'd better see 'im. Hif 'e's an himpostor you vill know what to do vith 'im; but it's my opinion 'e's the genuine harticle."

The Rev. Mr. Sleek stared at the servant.

The news certainly staggered him.

He was fully persuaded that Harry Hazel had gone to the bottom with the yacht Rosalie.

That the boy had escaped and had returned home three months after the disaster appeared to him to be incredible.

If it was true—the reverend gentleman saw certain complications ahead for which he was hardly prepared.

He certainly showed no sign of pleasure at the thought of the boy's return to life, and this was hardly in keeping with his cloth.

He was a minister of the Gospel—a sort of free lance, it is true—but still a minister.

At any rate his attire, the prefix to his name, and the fact that he was at the head of a missionary society for the religious enlightenment and humane advancement of the benighted Hottentots proclaimed him as such.

He felt the necessity of hiding his feelings before his servant, so he said in a slow and half-choked tone:

"Show the visitor in, Atkins."

The servant bowed, opened the door, and said:

"Walk hin, Mr. 'Azel. The Rev. Mr. Sleek vill see you."

Harry walked in and stopped near the door.

He knew he was in his father's library, for he recognized every feature of the room by heart.

"Take a seat, young man," said the reverend gentleman, after surveying his young visitor from head to foot. "You can go, Atkins."

The servant bowed and walked out, but being a curious individual, he remained outside with his ear at the keyhole.

Harry looked enough like his father to assure Mr. Sleek that Harry Hazel really stood before him.

The boy stepped slowly forward, with a world of sorrow in his face.

The presence of the strange, clerical gentleman at his father's desk, in the attitude of a man who assumed undisputed possession, told the boy that the servant had spoken the truth—his father was dead, and another had taken his place, but by what right was yet to be learned.

Harry sank into the seat beside the desk and, his feelings giving way, he burst into tears.

The Rev. Mr. Sleek sat back, composed, his hands in the

form of an apex, as ministers have a penchant for doing, and waited for the lad to recover.

"You are the Rev. Mr. Sleek, I understand?" said Harry at length.

"That is my name," replied the clerical gentleman, suavely.

"You are in charge of this house?"

"Such is the fact, since the untimely death of my lamented and good friend, George Hazel."

"Then my father is dead?" said the boy, in a choked voice.

"Am I to understand that you are his son Harry, who went to sea on the yacht Rosalie, which was reported lost somewhere in the Caribbean Sea?"

"I am. The yacht was wrecked on a small island, and I am the only one of the party who escaped."

"You are mistaken. One sailor of the crew was picked up and brought to this city, where he died shortly after his arrival. He gave out that he was the only survivor. Since you are Harry Hazel, a fact I will not dispute, though I have never had the pleasure of meeting you before, two evidently survived the wreck. When the news of the loss of the yacht was published, your father naturally believed you had gone down with the others, and the shock was, I may say, too much for his weak heart to stand, and he never rallied from it. As the yacht was lost three months ago, I shall be glad to learn how it is you did not turn up until now."

"That is easily explained. The yacht went to pieces on a small, low island, and there I was marooned until ten days ago," replied Harry.

The boy gave a brief outline of his experience on the island, and Mr. Sleek did not doubt that he told the truth.

"It is unfortunate, Master Hazel, that things happened as they did," said the reverend gentleman, "because your father, when dying, in the belief that he was childless, executed a paper leaving everything of which he died possessed to the Missionary Society for the Religious Enlightenment and Humane Advancement of the Benighted Hottentots of South Africa, of which society I have the honor to be the acting head. This paper leaves you entirely out in the cold. As that is unfair to you, now that you have, as it were, returned to life, I shall use my best endeavors to arrange some kind of a legal settlement by which you will be suitably provided for," said Mr. Sleek, a benignant expression resting like a halo over his smoothly shaven face, as though the essence of human kindness was flowing through every vein in his body.

Harry hardly noticed the meaning of his words, for the great loss he had suffered by his father's death overshadowed everything else.

Nevertheless, one thing stood out prominently before him, and which he felt he must have an immediate explanation of, and that was the dominant position the reverend gentleman held in his father's house.

He had never heard of the Rev. Mr. Sleek before, nor had he ever heard his father mention the man's name.

When and under what circumstances had the reverend head of the missionary society and his father come together, and through what astonishing combination of affairs had he taken his dead father's place.

Harry felt that he could not grapple with the situation until he knew the facts, which were to him a mystery, so he put the question to Mr. Sleek.

Evidently that gentleman was expecting to be catechised on the subject by his young visitor, and was prepared to satisfy his curiosity.

CHAPTER II.

WHICH EXPLAINS A FEW THINGS.

The Rev. Mr. Sleek uttered an ahem like a man clearing his throat, and proceeded to put the boy in possession of some of the following facts:

While seeking contributions, of which his missionary society stood in great need, he had been introduced to George Hazel, at that gentleman's private bank in the Wall Street district.

This happened about a week after Harry sailed for the Tropics on the yacht.

Mr. Hazel had a large and generous heart, and the eloquence of the reverend gentleman having impressed him with the sad condition of the benighted Hottentots, both individually and collectively, he had been induced to contribute liberally to what he regarded as a worthy cause.

Furthermore, as he was lonesome in his home after the departure of his only son, and the Rev. Mr. Sleek having ex-

pressed dissatisfaction with the conditions he experienced at the boarding-house where he sojourned, averring that the young people who largely predominated made fun of his charitable mission. Mr. Hazel prevailed upon the reverend gentleman to make his home with him temporarily while his son was away on his trip.

Mr. Sleek accepted the invitation, and forthwith had his trunk and other belongings removed to the Hazel home.

The clergyman was a fluent and persuasive talker.

He regaled the banker with an interesting account of the Hottentot country, where he averred he had spent many years of his life, devoting all his energies to the amelioration of the benighted condition of the natives, with whose unhappy condition he said he deeply sympathized.

These people had souls the same as those of the more favored people of the earth, and the society regarded it as its duty to lead them out of the darkness of original sin and pristine ignorance into the broad and glorious light of Christianity and beneficent knowledge.

The Hottentots, the reverend gentleman averred to his new friend the banker, had been sadly overlooked by the regular missionary societies, owing, probably, to their geographical position and other difficulties.

Mr. Hazel, not being familiar with the country of the Hottentots, though he said he had heard that it was not so inaccessible as Mr. Sleek maintained it was, felt bound to accept the statement of one who had spent so many years of his life on the spot, and by virtue thereof might be presumed to know whereof he spoke.

Finding his host such a ready and interested listener, Mr. Sleek dilated upon the character, habits and miserable condition of the natives under the unfortunate circumstances in which Heaven was pleased to place them.

He told of the splendid efforts made in their behalf by his society, but unfortunately those efforts were greatly hampered through lack of funds.

The result was he secured a second donation from the sympathizing banker.

Thus matters went on at the Hazel home, the missionary daily strengthening his hold upon the good opinion of his host.

Then came the news of the supposed loss of Harry.

The banker wilted under it like a flower scorched by the fiery breath of a sirocco.

His heart gave out, and the Rev. Mr. Sleek, fortified by the verdict of the physician, saw that his graft was about to fail him.

Naturally this was distasteful to him.

His active brain, working overtime, suggested a splendid coup.

Having learned that the reported death of the boy removed the only person Mr. Hazel cared for, or had any claims upon his property worth considering, he hurried to a cheap lawyer and had a document prepared which would transfer to him, in trust for the missionary society, all of the banker's property, as well as his business, if he could prevail on the dying man to sign it.

He lost no time in getting back to the house with the paper, accompanied by the lawyer's clerk to act as witness, but to his consternation he found on reaching there that Mr. Hazel had expired a short time before.

Apparently his brilliant scheme had crumbled into dust.

The Rev. Mr. Sleek, however, was a man of infinite resource.

After lamenting the death of his friend, he took the clerk aside, and telling him it was a shame that the banker's property should revert to the State for lack of a legitimate heir, when its diversion to the missionary society in the interests of the benighted Hottentots would do so much good, he suggested that, as Mr. Hazel could hardly be regarded as dead until he was cold, it would be the proper thing to try and secure his signature to the paper by placing a pen in his fingers and guiding it in the way it should go.

If the clerk was willing to witness that kind of a signature, and swear in court to its genuineness, he, Mr. Sleek, would see to it that the young man was taken care of in a generous way by the society.

The clerk, who was a sandy complexioned chap, by the name of Spencer, hesitated at the risk involved, incidentally remarking that his conscience was rather a delicate one.

Thereupon Mr. Sleek, who knew his man, mentioned a consideration, payable regularly once a month, which he said ought to satisfy any healthy conscience that the benighted Hottentots had a greater claim on the dead man's estate than the graft-ridden State of New York.

After some further demur, in the course of which the afore-

said consideration was enlarged to cover the clerk's final scruples, the matter was arranged and the necessary signature obtained, with the clerk's John Hancock attached as witness to it.

After Mr. Hazel's funeral the deed transferring all of the banker's real and personal property, including his business, was duly recorded by the lawyer, and Mr. Sleek took possession of the same in the name of the missionary society, the headquarters of which was given as Cape Town, South Africa.

He immediately discharged the old servants at the house, and in their places hired a new cook, a new chambermaid, and a man named Atkins.

The reverend gentleman then called on old John Prescott, the white-haired cashier of the private bank, and conferred with him about disposing of the business.

The old gentleman expressed surprise that his late employer should have made such a singular disposition of his property, but Mr. Sleek assured him there was nothing remarkable in the act of such an excellent man as he had found Mr. Hazel to be, by which that gentleman had practically bequeathed his all in the interests of charity, since he had no blood kin to consider, and that his soul would be vastly benefited by adding his mite to a glorious cause.

The cashier could not dispute the right of the banker to dispose of his possessions as he thought fit, and so he said no more.

He advised the reverend gentleman not to be in a hurry to sell the business, for reasons which he advanced, and which Mr. Sleek admitted were good, and so the matter was deferred for the time being, and Mr. Prescott was authorized to conduct the bank till further notice as his judgment dictated.

Thus matters stood when Harry Hazel turned up, rather to the discomfiture of the astute Mr. Sleek, who, however, was by no means thrown off his balance by this unexpected turn of Fortune's wheel.

He was well able to protect himself against all hazard, and this he proposed to do by taking the easiest way, which he decided in his own mind was to turn over the banking business to the boy in full settlement for all claim against his late father's estate.

If Harry refused, he was ready to stand pat on the strength of the transfer deed, and fight the case out in court.

But being a religious gentleman, and recognizing the boy's right to half a loaf, though it was a small half, so to speak, he preferred to reach a settlement with as little friction as possible.

Having explained to Harry as much as he thought proper of the foregoing, Mr. Sleek told the boy that he was welcome to avail himself of his hospitality as long as he cared to do so.

"Your room is just as you left it, young man, and it will give me great pleasure to have you reoccupy it," said the reverend gentleman. "You shall board here free of expense, and no one shall question your right to come and go as you choose. I trust you will avail yourself of my offer, for I feel you are entitled to every consideration in view of your late father's generous donation to the missionary society which I have the honor to represent."

"While I thank you for your offer, sir, still I don't like to consider myself as an object of bounty in the house which, now that my dear father is gone, I cannot help regarding as my property," said Harry.

"It should be your property, I admit," replied Mr. Sleek, in oily tones, "but owing to its legal transfer, with all your father died possessed of, to the society, I regret that you have no valid right to it, nor to anything else."

"Am I to consider myself a pauper, then?"

"By no means. I propose to see that you are provided for. You are entitled to it. I shall see my lawyer to-morrow and arrange, if possible, for the immediate release to you of your father's banking business. That, I understand, represents a fair half of the estate. At any rate, it represents the productive part of it, and will provide you with an excellent living. I think the missionary society will be satisfied with this house and its contents, which is free and clear, and can readily be sold when, in my judgment, that seems advisable. When you have reflected upon the great and glorious mission the society is engaged in—the rescue of the benighted Hottentots from the darkness of ignorance—beside which the gloom of the Middle Ages is not to be compared with—you cannot but coincide with your father's benevolent act when, believing you were dead, he turned everything over to me, in trust, for those heathen people."

Harry made no reply.

Indeed, he was too grieved and bewildered to declare his exact sentiments on the subject.

And during the pause that ensued the dinner-bell rang in the basement, and Mr. Sleek, getting up with the alacrity which bespeaks a good digestion, said that the chief meal of the day was about to be served, and it would afford him the most extreme felicity to be honored by the lad's company.

Yielding to the reverend gentleman's insistence, Harry accompanied Mr. Sleek downstairs, like one who was not yet wholly master of himself.

CHAPTER III.

HARRY GOES TO WALL STREET.

Harry repaired to his room after dinner and found everything as he left it.

He sat down in the semi-gloom to think over his altered condition, and shed many more tears over his father's memory.

He had come back feeling like a bird, and the blow he encountered had left him sadly altered.

He was not the same boy in spirit who dashed up the front steps to the stoop two hours before, and no one will wonder thereat.

It is the unexpected that is always happening in life, but Harry never realized the fact before.

He went to bed at last still undecided as to what he was up against, and slept till awakened by the breakfast bell.

Mr. Sleek greeted him with the same distinguished consideration that he had shown him the evening before, mildly hoping he had slept well.

The meal passed in comparative silence, the reverend gentleman finding that Harry showed no great interest in his reminiscences of the Hottentot country.

After breakfast Harry said he was going out, and Mr. Sleek assured him that was his privilege, at the same time telling him that lunch was served at one, and dinner always at seven.

Harry started straight for his late father's banking office, which was on the ground floor of a Wall Street building, two or three steps below the level of the sidewalk, the other half of the space being shared by a brokerage firm.

He was a great favorite with old John Prescott, the cashier, whom he had learned from Mr. Sleek was in charge of the business pending its disposal.

No changes had been made in the small office force, and so Harry expected to find things there as he had last seen them.

He was anxious to talk to the old cashier, and get his advice as to how he should act.

It was some consolation to the bereaved boy to know that Mr. Sleek intended to hand over the business to him; but that did not remove the sting from the thought that a stranger, who he had to confess he half distrusted, and did not at all like, was to retain hold on the major part of the estate, even for the benefit of an alleged worthy cause.

Harry knew more about the Hottentots than his father had, and he did not think they stood in so much need of outside help as Mr. Sleek averred they did.

Besides, he knew nothing whatever about the standing of the missionary society of which the reverend gentleman said he was the head.

He would have placed more confidence in that organization had Mr. Sleek been less demonstrative as to its merits, and his own disinterestedness in devoting his life to its proper guidance and the objects it was supposed to represent.

He suspected that Mr. Sleek had more than one side, and that he knew how to nurse a good thing.

Still he was willing to give him the benefit of the doubt until he learned to know him better.

There was little change in the city to Harry's eye during his six months' absence, and particularly was this the case in Wall Street, where no new skyscrapers had recently been erected.

At last he reached his destination.

There was no change there.

His father's name was still on the big window, and in it was the same display of foreign and domestic coin, bills and bonds.

Looking through the glass he saw the white-headed old cashier waiting on a caller, and there was no change about him.

"How glad he'll be to see me," cried the boy, with a thrill of satisfaction over the fact that he knew he had one disinterested friend in the venerable John Prescott, who had worked for his father for a quarter of a century, and though many years the banker's senior, still survived him.

Then Harry, overlooking the fact that he was supposed to be dead, and thinking only of greeting his friend the cashier, rushed in as the customer left Prescott at liberty.

"Mr. Prescott, how are you?" he cried, shoving his arm across the counter.

The cashier turned around and looked at him.

Then he gave a gasp and his jaw dropped.

"Good heavens!" he cried, grasping the inner edge of the counter. "It can't be you are Harry Hazel—not dead!"

"Sure I'm Harry Hazel, and I'm not dead by a good deal. I've just got back, the only survivor of the wreck of the Rosalie."

The bookkeeper and the junior clerk attracted by the cashier's excited speech, looked toward the counter, and they started in amazement on beholding Harry's well-known features.

"Harry—Harry!" cried the old man, the tears starting into his eyes and his voice shaking with emotion. "My dear boy! You have given me a great shock, but heaven knows how delighted I am to see you alive and well, when we all supposed you were lost at sea."

He shook the boy's hand as though he never meant to stop.

"Come around into the private office. Come right around."

He met the boy at the private entrance and pulled him into the little room where his father's desk stood, shutting the door after him.

"Have you just reached the city?" said the old man, tremulously.

"No. I arrived last night and went straight home—"

He stopped with a gulp in his throat, and the tears rushed into his eyes.

He was about to say home, but he recollected that the family mansion was no longer a home to him—that his father was dead.

"You have learned the sad intelligence, then?" said the cashier, in a tone of sympathy.

"Yes. My father is no more. He is dead and buried these three months. The news of the loss of the yacht killed him."

"You saw the reverend—"

"Mr. Sleek—yes. He appears to have got around my father before he died, and is in possession of everything that rightfully belongs to me."

"But he shall not keep it," said the old man, energetically. "If there is justice in law you shall recover your property. You must contest his claim at once. I have a few thousand saved up in bank. I will hand every dollar of it to you to fight for your rights. If necessary, I will mortgage my little house. You must get what is yours by every right under the sun."

"Thank you, Mr. Prescott, but I may not need to accept your generous offer. Mr. Sleek told me last evening that he recognizes my right to at least a half of my father's property, and he said he intended to see his lawyer to-day about arranging for the release in my favor of this business, which he said was the productive part of the estate, and would furnish me with a good living."

"Mr. Sleek told you that?"

"He did."

"It is not enough. You should have the house, too. It's easily worth thirty thousand dollars."

"I'm afraid he will contest my claim to that."

"Let him. We will fight him."

"We won't talk about that now. He has a legal transfer deed to everything, and from the little I know about law, the burden of a fight will rest on the plaintiff. Undue influence would have to be brought to be the basis of a suit, and that will have to be proved. I think the easiest way will be the best. Let me get hold of this business first. That will furnish me with the sinews of war in case I should decide to make a contest."

"You have a clear head, Harry. Excuse the impetuosity of an old man who looks on you almost as a son. You are almost the image of my dear, departed employer—a man than whom there was none kinder, more generous, or noble. Ah! why was not I, old and withered, with the snows of life's winter in my hair, not taken, and he, still vigorous and good for many years yet, left to pass a few more milestones in age's calendar? The ways of Heaven are inscrutable, and we may not question them," said the old man, in a broken voice.

Harry grasped the old cashier's hand feelingly.

Then they spoke about the banker's last days in the office, how he had been all right up to the day that the news reached him of the loss of the yacht.

He got the intelligence on his return home, and he never came back to the bank.

Harry had been closeted with John Prescott for half an hour,

when the junior clerk knocked and said that a depositor wanted to see the cashier, so Harry left the room and went outside to astonish the clerk and bookkeeper with a brief account of his experiences while marooned on the Caribbean key.

The two employees said they were very glad to know that Harry had escaped the fate that befell the others on the ill-fated yacht, and they sympathized with him over the death of his father.

Harry remained downtown most of the day, and returned to his old home about five o'clock.

He was admitted by Atkins, who told him that Mr. Sleek wished to see him in the library.

The boy went to that room and was received in the same oily way by the reverend gentleman.

The clergyman told him that he had, in accordance with his promise, seen his lawyer, and that he had been told he could turn over the banking business to the boy in accordance with any arrangement he chose to enter into, since as trustee for the missionary society he had full command over the gift presented to the Hottentot cause by the late Mr. Hazel.

"You will therefore go with me to the law office in the morning and we will get the matter over with right away," said Mr. Sleek, with a benevolent smile. "The expenses of the transfer will be borne by the society, and once the documents are signed, all you will have to do will be to place yours on record in the County Clerk's office, and then start for Wall Street and enter into complete and undisputed possession of your father's business. In dealing thus fairly with you, young man, I am only following the Christian principle that we should do to others as we wish others to do to us. That's the golden rule," and the reverend gentleman leaned back in his chair and beamed upon the boy, as if he felt he was doing Harry a very great favor indeed by yielding a slice of the donation which legally belonged to him as trustee for the society interested in the benighted Hottentots.

Harry nodded his head as a matter of form, not because he was particularly impressed by the Christian principle to which Mr. Sleek claimed credit.

The more he saw of the reverend gentleman the more he disliked and distrusted him.

He even had some doubts concerning the actual existence of the missionary society that Mr. Sleek asserted he had the honor to be head of.

In fact, he suspected that Mr. Sleek was a grafter, pure and simple, masquerading under the disguise of a minister of the Gospel.

He believed that it was policy to fall in with the reverend gentleman's views, since he was in no financial position to contest the deed of transfer.

It did not occur to him that there was any flim-flam business about the deed.

He accepted it as a genuine expression of his father's sentiments on the eve of his death, though he was fairly satisfied that Mr. Sleek had influenced his father to sign it.

If the reverend gentleman thought Harry Hazel felt grateful toward him for giving up a small half of the property, the whole of which rightfully belonged to him, he was never more mistaken in his life.

In due time dinner was announced, and Harry went down to the dining-room with Mr. Sleek to partake of it.

Next morning they rode downtown to the office of Mr. Sleek's lawyer, to whom Harry was introduced.

The boy had no great acquaintance among lawyers.

As a body he was not favorably disposed to them.

He had read so many novels and tales in which a lawyer was represented as a spider who enticed clients into his web, entangled them in the sophistries of the law, and sucked their bank accounts dry, that he was half afraid of the profession.

At any rate he wasn't attracted to Mr. Simpson, Mr. Sleek's legal adviser.

The documents were ready for signing.

The first was the transfer paper, and this was handed to the reverend gentleman to sign.

The red-headed clerk, Spencer, then signed it as witness.

The second paper was spread before Harry, and he was requested to affix his signature.

He found that it was a complete renunciation of all his rights as his father's heir to all and any interest in his father's estate in consideration of the transfer to him absolutely of the Hazel banking business at No. — Wall Street.

The astute Mr. Sleek had taken this additional precaution to make himself undisputed master of the bulk of the estate.

Harry objected to signing the document on general principles.

"Why is it necessary when the deed of transfer signed by my father conveyed his entire estate to you in trust for your society?" he said to Mr. Sleek.

The reverend gentleman replied that he was acting on the advice of his legal representative.

"It is a mere matter of form," put in Lawyer Simpson. "Its purpose is to cover any loophole that might hereinafter lead to a disagreement between you and Mr. Sleek."

"Why should we have any disagreement?" said Harry, ingenuously.

"There is no reason why you should, since Mr. Sleek is treating you quite handsomely; but the unexpected often happens, and it is the business of a good lawyer to interpose a substantial barrier in the interest of his client."

"But I don't like to sign the paper," said Harry.

"Unless you do, the business of transferring the banking business to you cannot proceed to a conclusion."

Mr. Simpson, having made that ultimatum sufficiently plain, said nothing more.

Harry saw that he had to sign the paper or get nothing.

He resented the squeeze, and for a moment thought of making a threat to contest in court the transfer deed which bore his father's name.

He decided on reflection that such a course was too risky in his case, so he signed the document unwillingly.

The lawyer then handed him the paper which gave him the banking business, and advised him to have it recorded on his way downtown.

Mr. Sleek shook hands with him and wished him luck, and said he need be in no hurry to leave his late father's house, as he was very welcome there.

Harry then took his departure and started for Wall Street.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EMERGENCY SIGNAL.

On his way downtown Harry filed the deed of transfer and waited for a certified copy of the same, which he received for the customary fee.

When he reached the office which he could now claim as his own, he handed the paper to the old cashier to look over.

"It seems to be all right, Harry," said John Prescott. "You are now a young banker, and though the business is a small one, it will turn you in a fair profit. I will act as your general adviser, and as you are under age it will be necessary for me to continue to sign all checks, under the authorization issued to me by Mr. Sleek, and which it will now be necessary for you to sign as the new owner of the business."

Harry decided that it was not necessary to make any change in the sign on the window, except to add his name in very small letters as successor.

Later he made the same addition to the bank's printed matter, such as letter-heads, envelopes, etc.

It was with a proud sense of satisfaction that Harry took possession of his father's private room, at the back of the little bank, and realized that he was in business for himself—that he was a young banker.

For a while the new sensation banished the unpleasant reflection that a stranger was in possession of his home, from which he had departed as soon as he found suitable lodgings for himself.

He carried away without opposition everything that belonged to him.

Mr. Sleek also magnanimously permitted him to take many mementos belonging to his father.

They were not worth a whole lot in the reverend gentleman's opinion, but to Harry their value was great from a sentimental point of view.

Many of the smaller articles came from his father's desk, and being at a loss for something to pack them in, Mr. Sleek handed him an empty money-box belonging to the late Mr. Hazel, from which he had removed a number of bonds and shares of stock in an industrial company in which the dead banker was interested.

Mr. Sleek, on investigation, found these evidences of indebtedness had but a small market value, and were difficult to dispose of, so he put them aside for future disposition.

If the reverend gentleman had known the money-box better it would have been the last thing he would have tossed so carelessly to the boy; but he didn't know that this particular box held an important secret, and he lived to regret having let it pass out of his possession.

Harry carried the money-box to his office, placed the articles he had stowed in it on and in his desk, and then used the box to hold papers and other things.

The young banker expected that Mr. Slek would sell the house, realize on the rest of his late father's property, and start for South Africa.

The reverend gentleman, however, seemed in no rush to get back to the country of the benighted Hottentots, for whom he expressed so much consideration.

New York appeared to be good enough for him.

It is true the real estate market was dull, and the house would not have brought its real value.

It is also a fact that the financial market was in the dumps, and the price of the securities held by Mr. Slek, in trust for his society, went below par.

At any rate the clergyman found the house very much to his liking, and being well supplied with money, none of which found its way to South Africa in spite of his allegations while canvassing for donations that the society was sadly hampered for funds to carry out its beneficent purposes, he made himself at home in Harlem.

In the meanwhile, Harry conducted his banking business under the eye of the old cashier, who felt happy to serve the son of his old friend and employer.

It was well along in October, and business was fairly active in Wall Street.

Harry kept all his father's customers, and managed to add a few new ones.

One day the young banker heard a couple of well-known stock-brokers talking about an expected rise in copper.

He gathered from their talk that Idaho Copper, which was selling at \$5 a share, was certain to rise to \$15, owing to a combination between those who controlled the company and other large copper interests.

Here was the chance for those who got in on the ground floor to make a bunch of money.

The prospect somewhat excited the boy, and he determined to avail himself of it as far as he was able to do so.

He was afraid that Mr. Prescott would oppose the idea as being too risky for him to undertake.

The old man did not believe in Wall Street speculation.

He could raise \$2,500 on certain securities he had without the cashier being the wiser of it, and that would enable him to buy 500 shares of Idaho.

He hated to do anything without consulting the old gentleman, who, he knew, had his best interests at heart.

It looked underhand and mean, even though he had a perfect right to risk his property.

If the deal went wrong he would have to admit what he had done.

If it was the success he counted on, he would be several thousand ahead, and he could keep his secret.

After much cogitation he allowed the temptation to get the better of him, and taking the securities to a money-lender, he raised about seventy per cent. of their market value, and going to the little bank on Nassau street, in preference to a Curb broker, he bought the 500 shares outright, and two days later received the certificates of Idaho stock.

He dumped everything out of his money-box, put the certificates in it and placed the box in his closet.

Harry made a number of new friends in the Street, outside of his customers, and among the rest a boy of his own age named Tom Beaseley, who worked in the brokerage office on the other side of the central partition.

Tom was margin clerk for his firm, and expected to be promoted at Christmas.

Nearly every day he and Harry went out to lunch together, and quite frequently they went home in each other's company.

Tom was something of an amateur electrician, and one Saturday afternoon, after arrangement with Harry, he installed a signal wire from the young banker's private room through the wainscoting up outside to the ceiling of the passage and across through the dividing partition, thence down to a point behind his own desk.

They familiarized themselves with the Morse alphabet, and thereafter by pushing the buttons in their respective offices they could carry on a conversation without any one but themselves knowing anything about the device.

Thus when either was ready to go to lunch he would convey the fact over the wire, and when Harry was ready to go home in the afternoon, about the time that Tom's work was over for the day, he would signal his friend and ask him how soon he would be ready to quit.

It was a great scheme, and both were highly delighted with its workings.

Neither dreamed that the time was coming when the wire would prove of special value to Harry, at least.

One Saturday afternoon about the first week in December, shortly after Harry bought the Idaho Copper shares, and when they had gone up to \$8, much to his satisfaction, the young banker was detained by the necessity of writing a number of letters to old school friends.

He telegraphed the fact to Tom so his friend would not wait for him.

Tom ticked back word that he, too, was going to remain a couple of hours to pull up on his work.

"I'll be through before you are," returned Harry, "and I'll wait for you."

"All right," answered Tom. "I'll let you know when I'm ready to go."

The clerical force in both offices left shortly before one, and the two boys locked their front doors and returned to their desks.

An hour passed and three men stopped at the street door of the banking office.

They looked in through the window and saw that the place appeared to be untenanted, as they expected.

One of them, by the dexterous manipulation of a skeleton key, opened the door, and the three entered, closing the door behind them, but not locking it.

"We'll find the money-box in the back office, very likely," said the leader, which showed they were aware of the existence of the article in question, and that they were after it.

They made their way down the passage, opened the door of the private room, and unexpectedly came face to face with the young banker, who had heard their stealthy footsteps and left his desk to see what it meant.

The surprise was mutual, and for a moment the situation was strained.

Then Harry cried out: "What are you people doing in here, and how did you get in?"

"We came here on business," said the leader, coolly.

"Business! And the office closed! I locked the street door. How did you manage to enter?"

"Easily enough. The door was open. You only thought you locked it."

"I know I locked it," responded the young banker with emphasis. "You must have forced the door, and that means your visit here is not an honest one. Take yourselves off at once or I'll telephone for the police."

Harry sprang for his desk, but before he could reach the receiver of his telephone the three men flung themselves upon him and bore him to the floor.

In a twinkling he was gagged to prevent him giving an outcry, then he was placed in a chair, tied to it and shoved against the wall.

They did not take the trouble to secure his arms, and they expected their stay in the office would be brief, and while they were there they could keep their eye on him.

"Now for the money-box," said the leader, looking around.

That article was not in sight, so the men hunted for it.

They discovered it in the closet.

"Now let's be off," said one of the men.

"Do you suppose I intend to carry it through the street?" said the leader.

"How else are you going to get away with it?"

"I don't want the box, but what's in it. My orders are to break it open and secure the important— What was that?" cried the speaker, looking over his shoulder at the prisoner, but seeing nothing suspicious.

And yet something very important was going on which the rascals failed to get on to.

When they pushed Harry and the chair against the wall they unconsciously placed him within reach of the electric push button.

While the three crooks were intent on the money-box, Harry, bound to the chair, and gagged, reached behind with his free hand and pressed the signal button in the wall.

His friend in the next office heard the alarm, and taking a pistol from his desk drawer, hurried to find out why he had been called.

It was the answering signal which had attracted the leader's attention.

CHAPTER V.

MR. SLEEK SHOWS A STRONG INTEREST IN THE MONEY-BOX.

Harry ticked off the following on the push-button.

"Tom: There are three crooks in my office. They have me bound and gagged, but I have the use of one hand, and am within reach of the button. These rascals are robbing me.

Telephone for the police, then come into the bank with any help you can pick up. Hurry, for time is precious. Don't answer."

Tom was a wide-awake young fellow, and he understood the situation in the next office, thanks to the electric wire arrangement.

He called up Police Headquarters, explained what was going on in the little bank, and asked for help.

Then he pulled a revolver out of his desk and started for the door.

In the meantime the crook leader had pulled a small hammer out of his pocket and was striking the end of the money-box with it.

The box was stronger than he had figured on, and was giving him a lot of trouble.

One crook stood near Harry while the other watched the leader.

Then something happened.

The door of the private office was pushed open and Tom stood there, revolver in hand.

"Hands up, you rascals! I've got the drop on you," he cried.

The leader sprang up, while the other two started back.

They were taken by surprise and at a disadvantage.

If they had been armed Tom might have got hurt.

As it was he seemed to be master of the situation.

The leader, however, was a quick thinker.

He flung the hammer at Tom with a quick, underhand swing, and the implement hit the revolver and confused the boy.

"Quick!" cried the leader. "Skip!"

The bunch rushed at Tom, swept him aside, and one tried to disarm him.

The boy fired, and he fell with a cry.

The others did not stop, but rushing along the passage, reached the front door and ran down the deserted street, disappearing around the corner of William.

Tom released Harry, and they looked at the wounded man.

He was not seriously hurt, but the ball had broken his collar bone, and he was suffering much pain.

When the police arrived Harry told his story and made a charge of attempted robbery against the captured crook.

He was marched off to the nearest precinct station, his wound attended to, and then locked up.

Next day Harry appeared against him in the Tombs Police Court, where he was held pending the capture of his companions.

When Harry came to think the matter over he recalled that the crooks had made no attempt to steal anything but the contents of the money-box.

That seemed to be the only object of their visit.

Then Harry remembered that the leader said: "I don't want the box, but what's in it. My orders are to break it open and secure the important——"

His words were incomprehensible to the young banker.

What did he mean when he said his orders were to break it open and secure something inside of importance?

Who had given him those orders?

Somebody who had in some way learned that the box held 500 shares of Idaho Copper stock, which was advancing in price?

Harry could not understand how anybody knew what was in the box.

His cashier didn't know it, and he was positive that his bookkeeper and junior clerk didn't, either.

How could an outsider learn anything about what the box contained?

It didn't look reasonable, but it puzzled the young banker just the same.

As he couldn't find a solution to it, he had to give it up.

Old Mr. Prescott was astonished to read in the Sunday morning paper that the bank had been entered by three men, whose purpose was defeated by the fact that Harry's friend, Tom Beaseley, was working overtime in the broker's office next door.

The paper reported that nothing had been stolen, which gave the old man a great deal of satisfaction.

Harry went over the situation with him on Monday morning, telling him about the strange words used by the leader of the intruders, and how the object of the rascals seemed to be solely the contents of the money-box.

"Well, you don't keep anything of value in that box," said Mr. Prescott; "if you did you wouldn't have it in your closet."

"There are some shares of Idaho Copper in it," replied Harry.

"Are there? I didn't know you had any stock of your own

in the office. Your father didn't speculate in the market, so—however, this is not my business. Maybe it belongs to a customer. In any case, you ought to take it to our safe deposit box and lock it up."

"I will do so this morning. I thought it was safe enough in the money-box, for burglarious attempts are rare in Wall Street."

During the next ten days Idaho Copper went up by degrees to \$15.25 a share.

Harry consulted with Tom about the advisability of selling at that figure, and his friend told him he had better, for he didn't think it would go up much higher.

So the young banker went around to the little bank and ordered his stock sold.

As the Market was lively, and the demand for Idaho Copper active, the bank's Curb representative had no trouble in selling the 500 shares right away in lots of 100.

Two days later Harry got his statement of account, and his profit footed up \$5,000.

That made him feel mighty good.

He called on the money-lender, redeemed his securities, and replaced them in his safe deposit box.

He had the satisfaction of feeling that he had relieved the old bookkeeper of any worry he might have experienced had he known the risk his protege had taken in the mining market.

His success with Idaho Copper turned Harry's mind toward making money out of stocks in general.

Having \$5,000 to operate with, which was independent of the bank's resources, he felt he could afford to take a chance, and he need say nothing about it at all to the old man, whom he knew would not approve of such a course.

During this time, though the police hunted for the other two men implicated in the outrage at the bank, they were not caught; although both Harry and Tom had furnished a good description of them.

The prisoner was released on bail furnished by Lawyer Simpson, the legal adviser of the Rev. Mr. Sleek, and later the Grand Jury handed down an indictment against him.

Just when he would be tried rested with the public prosecutor.

The money-box, which figured in the case, was used for various purposes by the young banker at his office, but he kept nothing of any great value in it.

Most of the time it rested on the top of his desk.

Harry didn't expect any further effort would be made to steal it, for he did not regard it as worth carrying off.

But that was because he was ignorant of the secret connected with it.

Had he had an inkling of it he wouldn't have handled it so carelessly.

He merely regarded it with a sentimental interest because it had been the property of his father, and also because it was handy to hold things.

One morning he was rather surprised to receive a visit from Mr. Sleek.

The reverend gentleman was shown into his private office, and expressed great pleasure at seeing the boy again.

As he spoke his sharp eyes wandered about the little office, and they rested for a moment on the money-box.

"How are you getting on, my young friend?" said the head of the Hottentot Missionary Society.

"First rate, Mr. Sleek. I am making a living, and am very well satisfied with the general outlook," replied Harry.

"I am delighted to hear it. Really, I feel a sort of personal interest in you after the generosity I have experienced—I refer to the society—at the hands of your respected father," said Mr. Sleek, beaming on the young banker.

Harry rather doubted the sincerity of the reverend gentleman's statement, but for politeness sake he thanked him.

"I hope you will come up and dine with me on Sunday," said Mr. Sleek. "We ought not be strangers to each other."

"Thank you for the invitation, but my time is pretty well taken up on Sunday, and I don't think I could accept."

Mr. Sleek protested, but he did not press the matter very hard.

After some talk about the Hottentots, Harry asked him when he was going back to South Africa.

"I can't say, my young friend," he replied. "My stay in this city is rather indefinite, as I have a great deal of business to attend to in the society's interests. I am making regular shipments of supplies to Cape Town, which are forwarded from there to the capital of the Hottentot country, where they are distributed to the various villages by our agent. Each village has its own resident missionary, who looks after the spiritual

and temporary welfare of the natives under his charge. It is a great work, young man, and our reward will come hereafter."

Mr. Sleek rolled his eyes upward, as if to indicate the direction whence he looked for that reward to come.

Then his eyes rested again on the money-box.

"My young friend," he said, "have you any special use for that money-box I let you have to take your things away in?"

"You mean that box?" said Harry, in some surprise.

"I do. I could use it to great advantage at present. I will give you \$5 for it."

The reverend gentleman's offer was a further surprise to him.

"Why, you can buy a new box exactly the size of that for half the money at any first-class stationery store," he said. "That box has been damaged a bit since I brought it here."

"I don't mind if it is not in the best of order," said Mr. Sleek, ignoring the question of cost. "I will take it just as it is."

Harry wondered why his visitor preferred that box to a new one, and still more why he was willing to pay twice what it was worth.

Clearly the reverend gentleman had some special reason.

Whether he had or not, the young banker did not care to sell his father's money-box for any price, and he told the gentleman so.

Mr. Sleek looked disappointed, and showed it.

"Couldn't you loan it to me for a day or two?" he asked.

The gentleman's insistence made Harry suspicious.

He said that it wouldn't be convenient to loan it, much as he would like to oblige the reverend gentleman.

The gentleman looked much put out, and having nothing further to say, he got up, bowed stiffly to the boy and took his leave.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MONEY-BOX IS STILL AN OBJECT OF INTEREST.

Mr. Sleek's pronounced desire to get hold of the money-box set Harry thinking.

The more he thought over the interview the more it struck him that the reverend gentleman's visit was entirely connected with the money-box.

Why?

He could not imagine even in the remotest degree.

The box had been entirely empty when the clergyman handed it to him and said he might have it.

Consequently Mr. Sleek's eagerness to recover it could not be on account of anything of value carried off in the box.

Simply as an empty money-box it could have no value to him.

The gentleman's desire to obtain it was, therefore, a great mystery to Harry.

He took the box down, dumped everything out of it, and looked it over, but the inspection gave him no clew.

After returning it to the top of the desk he remembered the effort made by the presumed crooks to break it open, and the leader's words that he had orders to secure something valuable the box was supposed to hold.

Burglars don't generally act on other people's orders, but on their own plans.

Altogether it seemed as if something most peculiar surrounded the money-box.

He called the old cashier in and told him the particulars of Mr. Sleek's visit.

"There is no doubt in my mind that he came purposely to get that box," said Harry. "It interests him a whole lot more than it should, and I can't figure out the reason to save my life."

"I don't see that there is any reason why you should worry about it," said the cashier. "The box is yours and he can't get it unless you choose to let him have it. As you say it was entirely empty when he gave it to you, there can't be any pressing reason why he should want it back."

"Whether there is or not, he is not going to get it back," said the boy.

That settled the matter for the time being, and the old man returned to the little counting-room.

A week passed, and then Tom Beaseley handed Harry a gilt-edge tip on A. & C. railroad stock.

This stock had been depreciated below its normal value by a steady bear effort, continued at intervals over a space of some weeks.

Tom told his friend that a big syndicate had been raiding it in order to frighten small holders into selling, and every share that came out the combine gobbled up.

The object of the syndicate was to corner enough shares to

enable the members of it to control the market, and enable them to boost the price up fifteen or twenty shares, when they intended unloading the stock on the public, because the lambs always showed an eagerness to buy a rising stock, and in their eagerness they did not notice that it soared higher than was safe for them to buy at.

This and much more Tom told Harry, and the result was the young banker felt here was another chance for him to make a haul.

So he went around to the little bank and ordered the purchase of 500 shares for his account at 90, the market price, on a ten per cent. margin.

A week later the price went up two points.

That of itself represented a perspective profit of \$1,000 to Harry.

While he was out at lunch one day a man entered the bank.

He had been hovering around the door for half an hour.

A rush of customers engaging the attention of the cashier and junior clerk seemed to bring the man in.

He slipped past the people at the counter and made for the private office.

Opening the door of the partition, he looked in.

The moment seemed favorable for whatever purpose he had in view.

He slipped over to the door of the small office and entered.

A moment or two later he came out with the money-box in his hand, and made his escape into the entry or corridor of the bank.

No one had noticed him, and he started for the door.

At that moment Harry came back, unexpectedly, for something he had forgotten.

He saw the man, and would have passed him, but he saw that he had his father's money-box in his hand.

That was enough for the young banker.

He grabbed the man by the arm with one hand and seized the box with the other.

A struggle took place between them.

Naturally, it attracted attention.

The intruder saw the game was up, so he abandoned the box, struck Harry in the face, and ran out of the bank.

Pursuit would have been useless, for the man lost himself in the crowd of people passing up and down the street.

He was not followed, however.

Harry was not a little staggered at this third attempt to get the money-box from him, and he could not help associating it with Mr. Sleek.

He also felt satisfied that the first attempt was incited by the reverend gentleman, too.

There was certainly some mystery about the box that he couldn't fathom.

He had another talk with the cashier, and after that a place was made in the safe for the box to rest.

"I'd give a whole lot to know why Mr. Sleek is so anxious to get hold of that money-box," he thought, as he started once more for lunch. "There is a reason, of course, but it's beyond me."

That afternoon he went over the matter again with Tom.

"You'd better give the box another and closer examination," said his friend. "Maybe it's got a false bottom, and there is something valuable hidden there that Mr. Sleek has got wind of."

"I don't believe that it's got a false bottom," said Harry. "It is just an ordinary money-box."

"But one of the three men that Saturday afternoon tried to break it open with a hammer. Where did he strike it?"

"He dented the cover along the edge as if trying to open it."

"Then he didn't work at the bottom of it?"

"No."

"Then it gets my goat. If I were you I'd lock the box up in your safe, or if you haven't room I'll leave it at your safe deposit vault. That will prevent the party who wants it from making a fourth and perhaps successful attempt to get it."

"It's locked up in my safe now," said Harry, and that ended their talk about the money-box that day.

Several days passed, during which A. & C. went up to 96. Naturally that made Harry feel good.

As he had no occasion to use the contents of the money-box, he did not go near it, and so it remained inside the big office safe.

It was safe enough there.

A fourth attempt, however, was made to get it.

When the junior clerk opened up one morning he found the private room in some disorder.

Everything had been ransacked.

The packages in the closet were scattered about on the floor.

The desk was broken open and the two big drawers at the bottom pulled out.

Apparently nothing had been taken away.

Anyway, the thief or thieves found nothing worth carrying off.

When Harry turned up and saw what had happened, he knew that it was another case of the money-box.

The persistent efforts made to secure it astonished him.

He would have put the matter in the hands of the police if he had figured it would do any good.

The office was put to rights again, and the young banker guessed that the bank wouldn't be bothered again, as the thief had satisfied himself that the money-box was not there.

"I guess Mr. Sleek will give the matter up now, if he is at the bottom of it," he thought. "He's a fine clergyman to engage in such business. I'll bet he's a fake. Poor father! How deceived he was in this Hottentot missionary! It is always the fine, generous spirited men who fall for the smooth yarns that men like Mr. Sleek know how well to get off with studied effect. I'm afraid father was awfully easy when approached by a slick schemer. It was fortunate that he did not run up against many of them."

Harry felt that the reverend gentleman ought to be exposed.

It would take time and trouble to do this, and he did not think it was worth the trouble, since even the exposure of the missionary would not get his father's property back, for unless fraud could be proved definitely, the deed of transfer would hold water.

Many a swindler had worked a similar trick and got away with it.

While Harry was thinking about the Rev. Mr. Sleek, that personage was thinking about him.

Or maybe his thoughts were more directly connected with the money-box, since that article appeared to interest him a great deal more than one would have thought.

However, he couldn't very well think of the money-box without combining the young banker with it, since it was in the boy's possession.

We may as well admit right here that he wanted the box badly.

What his reasons were we won't say, but they were strong enough to force him to go to considerable lengths to get it.

He had made one unsuccessful attempt himself, and was responsible for the other three which had been pulled off through the aid of Spencer, the red-headed law clerk.

Mr. Sleek couldn't have engineered the matter without Spencer's help.

Only men with a leaning toward crooked ways would have taken a hand in the game to carry off the money-box from a Wall Street office.

And they had to be pretty slick rascals at that, for Wall Street is well protected against the crooked fraternity.

Although Mr. Sleek's own methods were not above question—indeed, the scheme by which he obtained the signature of a dead man to an important paper was absolutely criminal—yet he had no acquaintance among crooks, and knew not how to approach such people.

Spencer, however, had quite an extensive acquaintance among the gentry whose faces are familiar to the rogues' gallery.

He was a rogue himself at heart, but was not smart enough to be a full-fledged crook.

Spencer found the men who were willing to take chances if paid for it.

Mr. Sleek was willing to pay to get the money-box.

Hence the three attempts on Harry's office.

Their failure to produce results caused the clerical gentleman to lose confidence in the vaunted ability of crooks to pull off a job of any importance.

Though the last attempt would have been successful had the money-box been within grasping distance, the fact that Harry no longer kept it in his office told Mr. Sleek that it would be a waste of energy and good money to try again in that quarter.

Its removal to some secure resting place gave the reverend gentleman a fit.

What was he to do now?

He put the question to Spencer, and that young man answered it.

He told Mr. Sleek what he would do if he were in his place.

The clergyman thought it over and told Spencer to go ahead.

And Spencer went ahead, as we shall show in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

ABDUCTED.

A. & C. reached par ten days after Harry bought it.

"Do you think it will go higher?" he asked Tom Beaseley.

"All the indications point in that direction," replied his friend.

"Then you would advise me to hold on?"

"I would. I have 50 shares myself, on which all my money is up, and I intend to hold on for 105."

So Harry made no attempt to sell, and next day the stock went to 103.

He held another consultation with Tom.

His friend showed him the previous day's stock report.

"The lambs are biting like a shoal of hungry fish," he said. "It is safe to hold on until to-morrow, at any rate."

"But the bottom might fall out of it at any moment," said Harry.

"That's true, but I'm going to risk it. You can use your own judgment."

As the price was then close to 104, the young banker decided to take a chance.

He dropped in at the little bank at half-past two and saw that A. & C. was quoted on the blackboard at 105 and a fraction.

He figured that he could make \$12,500 by selling then.

"I guess I'll sell," he thought. "A bird in the hand is worth several in the bush."

So he put in his selling order, and in fifteen minutes the little bank had disposed of his shares.

Although the outlook indicated that A. & C. would go higher, for there was a large demand for it by the outsiders, on the whole he felt relieved to be on the safe side.

The market was liable to break at any time, and he did not want to have that thought on his mind.

When he reached his office he called Tom up on their private wire and told him he had sold at 105 3-8.

"I guess you have done right in getting out from under," said his friend. "I haven't sold myself, but I guess I will to-morrow."

Harry didn't know that he was shadowed to his lodgings that afternoon by a smooth-faced young man who had been watching the bank door for half an hour.

When he went out after dinner he was followed by another young fellow who had been camped on the opposite side of the street.

The young banker went to a public library in his neighborhood and remained there till it closed.

On his way home he passed up a side street, as he had frequently done before.

A night-hawk cab kept pace with him, but he paid no attention to it.

Finally it drove ahead a bit and stopped in front of one of the houses.

The man seated beside the driver got down, opened the door, and another man stepped out.

They crossed the sidewalk toward the stoop steps of the house.

Their movements indicated that they were going there.

They stopped a moment, and one began rummaging his pockets.

There was nothing suspicious about their movements as Harry passed them.

In another moment he received a blow from a blackjack that sent him stumbling forward.

The crack laid him out senseless.

The two men laid hold of him and put him into the cab.

One got in with him, while the other resumed his seat beside the driver.

Then the shabby vehicle wheeled around again and was driven down the street at a quick pace.

At the corner of a wretched alley, in one of the dirtiest streets branching from the river in the town of Hoboken, stood a dilapidated building that fitted in well with its surroundings.

The ground floor was occupied by a saloon which bore a certain brewer's sign above the wide double door and equally wide window.

Forming part of the sign was the name of the proprietor of the ginmill in fair-sized letters.

When the sign was originally put up it looked clean, and was resplendent with gilt.

Since then the weather and the flying dirt of the neighbor-

hood, had converted it into a dingy hue, in keeping with the house itself.

The man who ran the saloon was an Englishman of doubtful morals.

He had run a public house for years previously in filthy Ratcliff Highway, London, under the name of the "Black Boy."

When he opened up in Hoboken he put that name over the door, thus following a custom he was used to, although not followed on this side of the water.

Having taken the entire building, he fitted the upper part out as a cheap hotel, entrance to which was had by the side door.

Over this door hung a red lamp, and the words "Black Boy Hotel" were painted in black on three sides of it.

On the whole, the name was appropriate, since the building was black with age and dirt, though it was no blacker nor dirtier than its neighbors, or the street itself, which had a black reputation with the police.

It was a busy thoroughfare during the daytime, because it led directly from the docks, where foreign steamships and other vessels were moored at big wharves, taking aboard and discharging their cargoes.

As the street was not kept clean, possibly for fear such a thing would shock the sensibilities of the dwellers, and put to shame the buildings, a rainy day produced a thick veneering of mud which the horses and wagon wheels of passing vehicles scattered to the right and left with fine impartiality.

The windows and woodwork of the "Black Boy" saloon got their share of the sprinkling, and helped make the boy blacker than ever.

The windows of the saloon was curtained with red stuff, which time, the sun, the smoke, and the summer flies, had converted to a dingy orange with black specks.

The proprietor of the "Black Boy" did a roaring trade.

His name was Christopher Ketch, and he claimed distant kinship with Jack Ketch, a notorious London hangman of the previous century.

He was an ex-prizefighter, and the dirty walls of his saloon were placarded with numerous chromos of fistic characters and prize-ring events.

The bulk of Ketch's customers bore a shady reputation, and some of them were guilty of deeds as black as the house.

When a crook, suspected to be in Hoboken, was wanted by the police, the detectives went to the "Black Boy" saloon first in an effort to pounce upon him.

If they didn't find him there it was probably due to the fact that he got the tip in time to clear out by the underground passages that ran from the cellar in several directions.

These passages were known to the authorities, but their outlets could not always be traced.

But for the fact that Ketch had a big pull with certain politicians, who could count on his services at elections, these underground burrows would have been largely done away with, because they handicapped the police.

As it was, the detectives had to do the best they could when orders carried them to the "Black Boy."

It was before this delectable place that the night-hawk cab, carrying the insensible young banker, drew up after crossing the river by ferryboat.

The young man who had ridden with the driver got down and entered the saloon.

Ketch and a young barkeeper were behind the bar dispensing liquid nourishment to a crowd of customers, whose faces looked hard, and whose eyes had acquired the habit of being always on the move to avoid being approached by any one unawares.

The newcomer went to the inner end of the bar and called Ketch over.

"The boy is here," he said.

"The boy!" said Ketch, for the moment forgetful of the arrangement he had made with Harry's abductors.

"The young banker of Wall Street we want taken care of. You've received \$100 on account."

"I twig," replied Ketch. "Is room is ready. I'll call my boy Nicky to show you upstairs. Is the bloomin' cove doped all right?"

"He's unconscious."

"Right. I don't want no more hevidence agin me than I kin 'elp. You understand?"

"Sure. He's dead to the world, so there isn't any danger of his learning where he's been brought."

Ketch pushed a button in the wall, and Nicky Needles responded.

Needles wasn't the boy's right name, but he was such a sharp

youth that he had been called as sharp as a needle, and so by degrees he came to be nicknamed Needles, and he had got accustomed to it, and preferred it to his own, which was plain Smith.

Ketch said something to Needles, whereat that lad nodded and told the visitor he was at his disposal.

"You'll fetch 'im in at the 'otel door," said the proprietor. "Nicky 'll meet you there and take you upstairs. Heverythin' is arranged for the pris'ner's reception, and I'll hawnsers for 'im stayin' there as long as you come across with the price, pervided the 'ouse hain't pulled. I always get word in had-vance of hanythin' like that, in which case 'e'll 'ave to be put in the well to get 'im hout of the way. You see I cawn't take hany chawnces with the perlice. They're sore on me 'cause I give 'em so much trouble, and bein' pertected, it's 'ard for 'em to hact. Of course, I take my 'at off to 'em, but my perliteness is lost on 'em, 'cause why? They call it a bluff. What they wouldn't do to me if they could is 'ardly worth mentionin'."

Ketch returned to his business of dispensing liquor, while the young man returned to the cab.

He opened the door and spoke to his companion.

In a few minutes Nicky appeared at the side door with a smoky lamp in his hand.

That was the signal for the removal of the prisoner from the cab to the hotel end of the house.

The young banker was carried up a succession of dirty stairs to a room on the fourth floor or top of the building.

It was a small room, very much out of repair.

A large patch of the ceiling had fallen out, leaving the slats exposed, but such a little thing as that never concerned the proprietor.

The paper on the walls was missing in spots, but that was to be expected.

There was an iron cot with a straw mattress and a pair of army blankets carrying an odor of their own.

There was an iron washstand with a metal bowl and pitcher, the finish of which had been largely rubbed off.

There was a cracked looking-glass, with a shelf under it upon which rested a dirty comb and brush.

They didn't look worth stealing, but nevertheless they were secured by small German silver chains.

There was a chair and a piece of frayed carpet on the floor.

That covered the furnishing of the room, and it was upon this charming combination of antiques that Harry opened his eyes some hours later, when the early sunshine was struggling for entrance through the broken slats of the window shutters, both of which were securely nailed to prevent them from falling into the dirty and narrow yard below.

CHAPTER VIII.

HARRY LEARNS WHY HE IS A PRISONER.

Harry sat up on the cot and looked around the miserable room in the greatest astonishment.

For a moment he did not recall what had happened to him on the side street in Manhattan.

"Am I dreaming or what?" he asked himself.

It was a natural question for him to put to himself under the circumstances.

Then his hand instinctively went to a very sore spot on the side of his head where the blackjack had laid him out.

His scattered thoughts began to shape themselves, and memory reasserted itself.

"I recollect now being hit by something hard on my way home," he mused. "No one was near me but those two men who got off the cab. They must have attacked me from behind. What was their object? Robbery, I suppose."

Harry felt in his pockets and found he had been cleaned out of the few dollars he had and his watch and chain.

"They got away with what I had, but why was I brought to this room? It's a cheap skate of a place, like a very common tenement. No such building is around the neighborhood where I was struck down. I can't understand it."

He got up and went to the door.

When he tried the handle he found the door was locked.

"Am I a prisoner?" he ejaculated. "If so, why?"

He opened the window and peered out through the broken slats.

He could easily see a succession of roofs and windows belonging to buildings of a low tenement order.

Then he caught sight of the river, which was only two blocks away, and across the river he could see a vista of Greater New York.

His first impression was that he was looking on the East River, with Brooklyn or its suburbs beyond.

The width of the river convinced him that such an idea was wrong.

After a careful inspection he hit the truth—that it was the Hudson.

Then he had been carried way over to New Jersey.

That deepened the mystery of his predicament.

"I'd like to know the meaning of all this?" he said. "Am I in Jersey City, Hoboken, Weehawken, or where? There is something very strange in this."

An hour passed, and then he heard the shooting of a bolt outside the door.

Then the key turned in the lock, and the door opened.

A hard-looking man stood there with a short club in his hand.

Harry looked at him, and was about to demand an explanation when a boy—Nicky Needles—walked in with a restaurant tray on which were rare dishes and a cup of smoking coffee.

The dishes contained a piece of cheap steak, some fried potatoes, hash house style, some bread and butter, and a fat pickel.

"Here's your breakfast," said Needles, laying the tray on the cot. "I'll be back for the dishes after a while. Eat hearty."

"Hold on," cried Harry, as the boy turned to go.

"What you want?" asked Needles.

"What is the meaning of this?"

"The meanin' of wot?"

"My being a prisoner here?"

"Dunno nothin' about it. Yer friends brought you here last night."

"My friends!" cried the young banker.

"To be boarded and lodged till furdur notice."

"But there is some mistake."

"Dat ain't my business. Make yer kick to the proper party when he comes."

"I want to know why I have been brought here."

"Don't know nothin' about it. I didn't bring yer. Dat's all I know."

Nicky walked out, the door was shut and secured again, and once more the boy was alone, if anything more astonished than ever.

It was clear he had been brought to the house for some unexplained purpose.

He was to be boarded and lodged in that rookery till further notice.

He couldn't make head or tail of the matter.

He looked at the food.

It wasn't very inviting, but if he didn't eat he would probably go hungry.

As he had a healthy appetite, he decided to avail himself of it.

The steak was tough, the potatoes watery, the butter poor, and the coffee muddy, but he made a meal and felt better.

Then he sat down to await the next scene in the drama of which he was the victim.

The sun rose slowly, and he heard the hum of traffic in the air.

Slatternly women appeared at the windows of the tenements, hung out washing and talked to one another from their windows.

He heard sounds in the house, but none near his room.

Time hung heavily on his hands as the day advanced.

"Mr. Prescott will wonder at my absence from the office," he thought. "Maybe he'll send a note to my landlady to learn if I'm sick. If he does he will find out that I was not home all night, and did not appear at breakfast. Then he'll wonder where I went, and why I haven't telephoned down to him."

Needles turned up and took the tray away, but was as dumb as an oyster.

Noon came, and soon after the boy brought up his dinner on a tray.

He was always accompanied by a man with the club.

Harry made no attempt to escape, for the club was significant of what would happen to him if he tried.

He ate the dinner, which consisted of roast beef, boiled potatoes, bread and butter, coffee and a big pickel.

He was not partial to pickels, and it went back as it came.

That afternoon wore wearily away.

About five o'clock the door opened again, and two men came in.

One was Spencer, the law clerk, elaborately disguised.

"How are you feeling?" asked Spencer, with a grin.

"Are you the people who are responsible for my being here?" asked the young banker.

"I am," replied the clerk.

"Then I should like an explanation."

"You shall have it. You have no suspicion why you are here?"

"None whatever."

"You were brought here to be ransomed."

"Ransomed!"

"Exactly."

"Then you know I'm in the banking business in Wall Street, and your object is to extort money from me."

"No, I don't want your money."

"But you said I was brought here to be ransomed."

"That's correct. The ransom is a small matter."

"What do you mean by that?"

"You have in your possession a certain japanned money-box. Hand that over through a note addressed to your cashier, and then you will be set at liberty."

Harry uttered an ejaculation of surprise.

This was a new scheme on the part of Mr. Sleek to get hold of the box.

That was the thought which flashed through his mind.

"So you are after that money-box?" he said.

"I am."

"You were back of the three attempts made to steal it from my office?"

"I admit it."

"Who are you acting for?"

"Myself."

"I don't believe it. Of what use is an empty money-box to you that you should go to such lengths to get it?"

"That is my business."

"Look here, it is a clergyman by the name of Sleek who wants that box."

Spencer gave a start, and then denied it.

"Your denial amounts to nothing with me," said Harry.

"Mr. Sleek called on me at my office and tried his best to persuade me to let him have it. Two persons are not likely to be actuated by the same object, so I am satisfied you are acting for Sleek. I referred to him as a clergyman. That is what he professes to be, but such acts as he is guilty of stamps him as a fraud. I am fully satisfied that in obtaining my father's property he used methods that no minister would adopt. If he really is a clergyman, he is a disgrace to his cloth."

"You are entirely wrong, young man," insisted Spencer. "I want the box."

"Why do you want it?"

"I have my reasons."

"Which you won't tell?"

"No."

"Well, you won't get that box from me. It isn't worth two dollars, intrinsically speaking, but it belonged to my father, and I wouldn't sell it for \$1,000."

"You would prefer to stay here cooped up for an indefinite time?"

"You wouldn't dare hold me here very long."

"Why not?"

"My cashier will put the case in the hands of the police as soon as he feels that something has happened to me."

"What of it?"

"A search will be made for me."

"Do you know where you are?"

"Apparently in New Jersey."

"You have guessed it. You will not be found here by the New York police."

"Don't be too sure of that."

"Are you going to give me an order on your cashier for the box?"

"No."

"Very well. You won't see me again for two or three days. By that time I guess you will have changed your mind."

"You'll have another guess coming."

"All right. You'll stay here till you give in," said Spencer, turning toward the door.

Harry made no reply.

As the two men walked out the young banker caught a glimpse of the man with the club outside.

Then the door was secured, and he heard the retreating footsteps of the three echoing along the uncarpeted corridor.

CHAPTER IX.

HARRY'S BREAK FOR FREEDOM.

"There is certainly some great mystery about that money-box," thought Harry, when again alone. "What can it be? I am satisfied it is Mr. Sleek who wants to get it back. He

has very strong reasons for it, and yet how can an empty money-box interest him? There is some secret about it, and when I return to the office I am going to find it out if I can."

His chances of getting back to the bank were rather dubious just then.

He was effectually caged in the top of some old tenement, and his chances of escape seemed to be very small.

Harry was not a boy to give up heart because surrounded by difficulties.

The money-box was in a safe place, and he intended it should stay there.

The very eagerness with which Mr. Sleek was trying to get it away from him made him all the more determined to hold on to it.

"Whatever his object, I mean to defeat it," said the boy, resolutely. "If he found my father easy, he won't find me equally pliable. I guess I take after my mother in some respects. I never heard that any one ever pulled the wool over her eyes, and Mr. Sleek is not going to pull it over mine."

At six his supper was brought by Nicky.

It was similar to his breakfast, except a plate of rice pudding was added.

It was dark then, and the man with the club brought a small lamp, which Nicky took and stood on the shelf.

Then the two went away and left Harry to his meal.

An hour later Nicky came back for the tray.

"You kin turn in now, Mister Pris'ner," he said, "for yer won't see me ag'in till mornin', and I reckon you won't have no other visitors."

He took up the tray and departed.

The young banker lay on the cot and gave himself up to thought.

If the Manhattan police were asked to look for him, he wondered if they would enlist the Jersey City authorities in the search.

If so, what chance was there that he would be found?

Had he known exactly where he was, and was aware of the ins and outs of the "Black Boy" establishment, he would have felt that the chance was small.

Nicky's statement that he was not likely to be disturbed again that night put the idea into his head of trying to make his own escape.

How was he to manage it since it was impossible to get out through the door?

The only way was to smash open the shutters, make a rope of the blankets and lower himself to the window below on the chance that he might get in there, and make his escape by way of that room.

It was only a chance, and seemed kind of desperate.

If he couldn't get in through that window, could he climb back?

And what if the blankets were not strong enough to hold his weight?

If they gave way he would be precipitated to the yard below, and that meant death or mortal injury.

It required a lot of nerve for Harry to finally decide on attempting it.

He went to the window and kicked the crazy blinds apart.

Then he waited fifteen minutes to see what would happen.

No notice was taken of the noise.

He tore the two blankets in half and, tying each section to the cot, tested it.

Then he combined the four and tested the knots.

He flung his improvised rope out of the window, where it dangled as far down as the second window below.

Crawling out over the sill, he let himself slowly down.

When his weight came on the rope he experienced a queer, crawling sensation, as it yielded nearly a foot.

But it held as well as a stout rope, and he was soon standing on the ledge of the window below.

The blinds here were not closed.

In fact there was only one.

When he tried the lower frame he saw, to his great satisfaction, that it was not secured in any way.

He stepped into the room, which was furnished very similar to the one he had left, but when he turned the knob of the door he found, to his disappointment, that it was locked.

There was no escape from that room into the house.

He returned to the window and looked down.

The blankets would let him down level with the next window.

But he saw that there was a light shining through it.

That indicated occupancy.

Apparently his daring effort to escape was blocked.

The idea occurred to him to swing to the next window.

He believed that lighted the corridor of that floor.

He got out on the ledge, and with the help of the blankets stepped across to the other ledge and caught hold of the side of the window.

He pushed up the window and stepped into the corridor, which was dimly illuminated with a gas-jet turned low.

He was on the third floor, with the main stairs ahead of him.

His heart beat high with hope, as escape now seemed within his reach.

Suddenly Harry heard footsteps of a couple of men coming up the stairs.

Discovery was certain unless he could find a temporary hiding-place.

He had little time to do this.

He grabbed the handle of the nearest door and turned it.

The door opened and he glided into a dark room.

As he closed the door, out of the darkness came a thick voice.

"Is that you, Nicky?"

On the spur of the moment the young banker said "Yes."

"Brought the beer?"

Evidently the speaker looked for the beer, and Harry was in a quandary.

To gain time he said "No."

"No!" roared the voice. "What did you go down for?"

"I'll fetch it in a minute."

There was a movement of a person getting up in bed.

The situation was critical to the young banker.

He opened the door an inch and peeped out.

The two men had entered one of the rooms.

The coast wasn't clear by any means, for Nicky Needles was coming up with a pitcher of beer in his hand.

Harry recognized the boy as the one who had brought his food to him.

To leave the room was to incur immediate discovery.

What was he to do?

Apparently this boy was the expected Nicky with the beer.

Then of course he was coming to that room.

"Nicky!" roared the voice. "What in thunder are you doin'?"

Harry dropped to the floor and crawled to the wall, for he heard the man feeling his way toward him.

The only way he could hide himself was to get under the bed, if he could effect a retreat in that direction.

"Where in thunder are you, Nicky?" cried the man.

He got no reply, and that made him mad.

"What kind of trick are you pullin' on me, you young varmint?" said the voice.

By this time Harry had reached the bed.

As he slipped under it the door opened and the real Nicky came in.

He bumped against the half-clothed occupant of the room.

"Hey, look out!" cried the boy. "Do yer want to spill the beer?"

The man uttered an imprecation.

"What are you up to, confound you?"

"Wot do yer s'pose I'm up to? Why didn't yer strike a glim? How could I tell yer were near the door?"

"How did you get out of the room without me seein' the door open?"

"What yer talkin' about?"

"You came in a moment ago and told me you hadn't brought the beer."

"You're dreamin'. Ain't I just come, and haven't I got the beer?"

"Me dreamin'? Don't you s'pose I've got ears?"

"Rats wid yer ears! How could I be in here a minute ago when I was comin' upstairs? Yer was asleep and dreamed it."

Nicky struck a match and lit the lamp.

Harry, looking from under the bed, saw a thick-set, pimply-faced man in his shirt and trousers.

"I wasn't asleep, you young viper. You came in to play some trick on me, but you found it wouldn't go. Where's the glass?"

"Here it is," said Nicky, taking one out of his pocket.

The man filled it from the pitcher and drank the contents off at a gulp.

Then he filled it again.

Nicky pulled another glass from his other pocket and reached for the pitcher.

"Hands off. Who's payin' for this beer?" said the man.

"You are, of course. I fetched it up, and I'll help yer drink it for my trouble."

"You can have the froth," chuckled the man.

"Aw, say, no larks. Hand it over."

"Hold your glass. If I let you have the pitcher you'll swill the whole of it. I know you, Nicky Needles."

"There was a cop downstairs lookin' for yer," said Nicky. The man uttered an oath.

"Ketch told him yer'd just been in for a drink and went away."

"Did it work?"

"I guess it did, for he walked out."

"Is it safe for me to stay here?"

"Yer might be in a wuss place. All yer've got to do is to bolt yerself in."

"Bolts won't keep the cops out."

"They'll keep 'em out long enough for yer to get away through the trap in the closet."

"So Ketch told me. He said the rope ran down to the cellar."

"Dat's right, it does. When yer get down yer'll find yerself in a narrer passage. Foller it and it'll lead yer to a short ladder. Climb up de ladder and feel for a bolt. Draw it and push up the trap. Yer'll find yerself inside an old box, nailed agin the house in the yard. Look out for yer head, for the box has got anudder bottom half way up. The upper half is full of dirt as a blind."

"How will I get out of it then?"

"Yer'll find a bolt on yer left. Pull it and push the side out. That'll let yer into the yard, see? Den yer kin climb the fence on the right into an alley. Foller it and yer'll come to a door. It ain't locked. Dat will take yer through the tenement hall to the next street. Den yer kin skip."

"Where'll I skip to? I'm likely to be nabbed on the street."

"Patsy Hogan's saloon is opposite the tenement. Go in there and yer'll be taken care of."

By that time the beer was finished.

"Now I'll be goin'," said Nicky.

"I'm to get the tip if the shack is raided, ain't I?"

"If yer hear the gong sound outside in the corridor it's the signal for yer to lose no time in gettin' down the trap."

"And I'll get down, you can bet. You haven't heard how the sailor is I knifed?"

"No, but they say he's as good as done for. Ketch says yer can't get out of the country too quick to save yer neck."

Nicky opened the door and walked out.

The man shut and bolted it.

"If the gong sounds I've got to skip," he muttered. "I mustn't fall asleep or I mightn't hear it. I'm that done up I don't know how I can keep my eyes open. I know what I'll do. I'll move the bed over against the door, and then if the cops come I'll hear them. I'll open the closet door and lift the trap. I can get down before the police can burst the door in. That's the ticket."

The man proceeded to put his plan into effect.

He seized the bed and pulled it over to the door.

As the room was lit up by the lamp, the sudden removal of the bed exposed the young banker, and the man saw him.

Believing it was a detective who had been concealed there waiting to take him at a disadvantage, the man reached for his revolver.

He forgot that he had placed it under his pillow.

Harry, at that moment, jumped up, prepared to make a fight of it.

The head of the bed was near him, for the man had swung the foot around, and he saw the butt of the weapon peeping out.

He took a step forward and got hold of the gun.

"Throw up your hands or I'll shoot," cried the young banker, covering the fellow with the muzzle.

The rascal hesitated, and then sullenly obeyed.

CHAPTER X.

BACK TO NEW YORK.

"You've got me, but you'll never get me out of this house," hissed the man.

"I don't want to take you out of this house. I only want to get out of it myself," replied Harry.

"What's stoppin' you?"

"You are."

"Me! I'd be glad to see you on the other side of that door."

"Open it and let me out, then."

"What game are you up to?"

"No game. I'm tryin' to escape myself."

"You! That won't wash. You're a detective, and you came here to get me."

"I'm not a detective, and I don't want anything to do with you."

"Then hand over my gun and you can go."

"I can't afford to trust you."

"I won't hurt you."

"I don't think you will as long as I have the advantage of you. Open that door or take the consequences."

Harry spoke resolutely, for he meant business and had no time to lose.

The rascal, still suspecting the boy for a detective, did not dare refuse.

He unbolted and unlocked the door.

"There," he said, throwing it open.

Then a new idea flashed across Harry's mind.

His original purpose was to leave the room and run down the stairs, but if the man gave the alarm he stood a great chance of being caught and returned to his prison room.

His eye resting on the closet door suggested escape by the way mentioned by the boy Nicky.

He determined to adopt it, for he remembered the directions.

To do that, however, he must rid himself of the man.

"Now, step outside into the corridor," he said.

"You are a detective and you're goin' to try and get me to the street," said the rascal.

"No. I'm going to stay in this room myself, and I don't want you here."

"This is my room."

"I don't care if it is. Get out."

"Are you goin' to shut me out?"

"For a while I am."

"What for?"

"No matter. March or I'll shoot you through the leg, and then the police will get you easily."

It occurred to the fellow that by going downstairs he would be able to get help enough to break into the room and capture the boy.

It was the easiest way out of his difficulty.

"You'll regret this, young fellow," he said.

Then he stepped out and Harry slammed the door and bolted it.

He knew he had no time to lose, for he guessed the man would go for aid to rout him out.

He threw open the door of the closet, but saw no trap.

He took the lamp and examined the floor, but it appeared to be solid, as closet floors usually are.

The trap was artfully concealed, and probably operated by a spring.

Harry looked for the spring, but could find none.

Time was passing and he was growing anxious.

Suddenly he heard a rush of footsteps coming up the stairs.

Then came a pounding on the door and shouts of "Open up."

Harry grabbed his revolver, fearing that he would have to make a desperate fight, with the odds against him.

The door was rattled and pounded on with fierce vigor.

Matters were growing strenuous.

Harry made another hurried search for the spring.

His weight rested on a loose board.

Immediately the whole floor fell, swinging on hinges, and the young banker narrowly escaped pitching headforemost into the abyss.

He flashed the lamp down and saw a narrow rope ladder secured to an iron rod descending into the darkness.

That was the way to the cellar.

Shoving the revolver into his pocket, he blew out the lamp, pulled the closet door shut and began his descent, surrounded by Egyptian darkness.

He took the precaution, however, of closing the trap, and then went on.

He had three stories to go down, and then another to the cellar.

The shaft was half as wide as the closet, and the smell that rose up it was far from being pleasant.

Harry thought that a sewer had little on it.

He had to grin and bear it, and went down the ladder as fast as he dared.

Whether the crowd above were breaking in the door or not he could not tell, for the closing of the closet door and the trap shut out all sounds from that quarter.

After what seemed an endless trip down through the black void, Harry reached the cellar at last, and found himself in the passage mentioned by Nicky Needles.

He followed it till he came to the short ladder.

This he climbed and felt for the bolt of the overhead trap.

He soon found it, and the trap dropped.

Striking a match, he saw a low box above. He crawled into it, and another match showed him the bolt that held the side board. He drew it and pushed the board outward. Crawling out of the narrow opening, he found himself in the yard. He lost no time scaling the fence and reaching the tenement-house door. As Nicky had stated, it was not locked. Passing through a filthy hall he reached the open street door. Both sides of the way were lighted up by gas jets in small stores and low groceries. Above these soared three-story cheap tenements—regular bee-hives of humanity, mostly wretchedly poor. Some of the men found work on the docks, others in divers other ways. All lived from hand to mouth, for living was high even here, and so were rents, considering the mean accommodations the tenants got for their money. Evictions for non-payment were frequent, and where those unfortunates went was a mystery to all but themselves. Scores of men hung around the entrances to the saloons, stores and tenements, for the night was mild for that season of the year. When the weather grew colder, or was inclement, they could be found in the warm, stifling ginmills. Harry made a bee-line down the street toward the river. That was the direction he would find the nearest ferry. He was at sea regarding his exact position. When he reached the corner of the street facing the docks he ventured to inquire where he was. The man, who was a longshoreman, leaning against the building smoking, looked at him in some surprise. "Don't you know you're in Hoboken?" he said. "I thought I was in Weehawken," said the young banker, as a bluff. "You're in Hoboken. Looking for the ferry?" "Yes." "It's yonder," said the man, pointing the direction with his pipe. "Thank you," said Harry, and he started off that way. In five minutes he reached the ferry buildings, and was just in time to catch a boat. It was with a sigh of thankfulness that he stepped aboard, and saw the lights of Hoboken grow dim behind him. He realized that he had had a narrow escape. Thereafter all was plain sailing, and he duly reached his boarding-house and went to his room. Then he sat down to consider what he should do about getting back at those who had kidnaped him. That the Rev. Mr. Sleek was at the back of it he did not doubt, but how was he going to prove it? He didn't see how he could do it. He also judged that it would be very doubtful if the police could find the two men implicated in his capture, for he could not give much of a description of them. He could describe the looks of the pair who had visited him in the room, but suspected they were both disguised at the time. The best way he figured was to put the matter into the hands of a private detective agency, and see what evidence could be found against Mr. Sleek. By watching his house, and noting what visitors he had, something might be discovered. First, however, he would consult with his old cashier, and be guided, in a measure, by his advice. Harry then turned in and slept serenely until morning.

CHAPTER XI.

WHAT HARRY LEARNS IN THE SALOON.

He reached the bank early, and when Mr. Prescott came in a few minutes later, he called him into his private room. "Where were you yesterday, Harry?" asked the old man. "I sent a messenger to your house, and the landlady returned word that you were out all night and had not yet returned." "You'd never guess. I was a prisoner——" "A prisoner!" interrupted the cashier, in great astonishment. "Yes, over in a filthy tenement in Hoboken." "You amaze me. How did it happen?" "I will tell you," and the boy at once put Mr. Prescott in possession of all the facts. "And the object of the rascals was to get hold of that money-box?"

"That's what it was. They were working for Mr. Sleek." "The sanctimonious old rascal!" cried the cashier. "There is certainly some mystery about that box. I think if I were you I'd knock it apart and see if anything is hidden in it." "My father wasn't a man to adopt secretive measures. Why should he have hidden anything of value in his money-box?" "He may have had reasons for doing so." "But unless he left some word of what he had done, how would any one know about it?" "He must have left a writing which Mr. Sleek found among his papers after he had given you the box. That would account for his eagerness to get it back." "True. If anything is hidden in the box it must be a paper of some kind. It could not have been his will, for that would cut no ice with Mr. Sleek. By transferring all his property to the clergyman before he died, nothing was left to be conveyed by a will. The surest way a man can dispose of property, so as to block a possible contest on the part of interested parties, is to hand it over to somebody, or some institution, before you die. Unless it can be shown that the transfer was secured by fraud, it will stand in law, so I have been told." "I have no idea what might be hidden in the money-box," said the cashier. "Your father did not confide his personal matters to me." "I shall follow your suggestion and knock the box apart to see if I can find a solution to the mystery. First, however, I intend to put this case in the hands of a private detective agency. A clever sleuth might get to the bottom of Mr. Sleek's anxiety to get possession of the box." "That's a good idea. It will cost you something, though." "I know; but if I secure results it will pay. Besides, I would like very much to find out the identity of the men that the reverend gentleman is operating through. Indications point to them being crooks. Rather strange company for a clergyman to hobnob with. We might find out that Mr. Sleek is a master crook himself, and is merely sailing under false colors. Honestly, I think that Hottentot Missionary Society is a pure fake. I should have investigated it. A letter to the authorities at Cape Town, South Africa, might have pricked the bubble." "Or an interview with the heads of some of the missionary societies of this city might lead to developments." "I shall make it my business to look into the matter right away. If Mr. Sleek is the fraud I believe him to be, he ought to be shown up." "He ought to be arrested and punished, I should say." "Well, that is all now, Mr. Prescott. I will call at a detective agency to-day." This Harry did after going to his lunch. He told everything to the chief of the agency and asked his advice. "It's rather a singular case," said the chief. "As the money-box is in your possession, why don't you go into it thoroughly. Doubtless if you pull it apart you will find a solution of the mystery." "I intend to." "You say that this Mr. Sleek secured all of your father's property by deed of gift for the benefit of the missionary society, of which he claims to be the head?" "Yes, sir. My father, believing me to have been lost at sea, and having no other relative he was interested in, allowed himself to be imposed upon by the reverend gentleman's wheedling tongue. I want you to investigate Mr. Sleek, and find out whether he is a real minister or a fraud. His actions certainly do not speak well for his sanctity." "Apparently not from your statement of the case," said the chief, dryly. "Very well, I will take the case, and advise you from time to time of the progress we make in it. You said when Mr. Sleek turned the banking business over to you, which was probably a sop to keep you from contesting the legality of the deed of gift, that he took you to his lawyer's." "Yes." "Give me the name and address of this legal gentleman." Harry furnished it. "That will be all for the present," and the young banker left the detective agency. That afternoon Harry got in touch with the stock market again. A broker friend told him that S. & T. was a good stock to get next to, as it would surely rise shortly. "How do you know it's going to rise soon?" asked Harry. "Will you keep the matter quiet if I tell you?" asked the trader. Harry promised he would. Then the broker produced a letter from his pocket and let the young banker read it.

It was from an official of the company—a relative of the broker's—and it told the trader if he got in on S. & T. right away he would double his money.

He said the rise would come about within a week, and he guaranteed it would not be less than ten points.

The broker told Harry that the information could be depended on.

The young banker thought the matter over, and before three o'clock he went around to the little bank and bought 1,000 shares at 85.

Then he passed the tip on to his friend Tom.

That evening after supper Harry went up to Harlem and strolled past the house which once belonged to his father, and would have been his but for the strategy of the Rev. Mr. Sleek.

What he expected to find but he could hardly have explained.

He was opposite the house when the front door opened and a young man came out, ran down the steps and started for Seventh avenue.

Harry saw the man's face in the gas-lamp, and recognized him as Lawyer Simpson's clerk.

In some way the clerk put him in mind of the bearded young man who visited him in the "Black Boy" hotel in Hoboken.

He decided to follow him.

The clerk, after turning into the avenue, walked to One Hundred and Twenty-fifth street.

He entered a saloon on that street, passed the bar and went into a room beyond.

A couple of pool tables were in this room, and both were in use.

The clerk was not here, and Harry figured that he must have entered a passage beyond.

He crossed over and entered it himself.

He discovered four card rooms opening off the passage.

They were equipped with heavy red draperies, divided in the middle, instead of doors.

When the rooms were not occupied the draperies were looped up on either side of the opening.

Three of the rooms were dark with the draperies up.

The fourth had the drapery down, and an electric bulb shone behind it.

The murmur of voices came from within the little compartment.

Harry judged that the lawyer's clerk had come there to meet an acquaintance, probably to play cards, and on the chance that he might learn something that would interest him, he popped into the adjoining room and dropped the draperies to conceal his presence.

He would have been disappointed in his expectation of hearing anything through the dividing partition but for the fact that the board nearest the wall was warped, and this left a narrow slit through which a ray of light shone.

Harry placed his head against the board and his ear to the slit.

That enabled him to hear all that passed in the adjacent compartment.

"Well, what did Sleek say when you told him that the prisoner had escaped from the place you and Benson took him to?" said a voice that sounded something like Lawyer Simpson's.

"He was mad," replied the clerk. "He said this was the fourth failure I had made, and he guessed there wasn't any use of making another attempt."

"Is he going to throw up his hands?"

"No, I don't think he is, but he's sore on me."

"Then I think we might tackle the matter independent of him. There is evidently something of great value in that money-box to induce him to make such persistent efforts to get hold of it. If we can get hold of the box ourselves, I think it would pay us. We could then make our own terms with him."

"I was thinking of that myself. Anyway, I've got him under my thumb."

"You mean with regard to the trust gift?"

"Yes."

"But you couldn't blow on him without incriminating yourself."

"I know it, blame the luck! And he knows it, too, that's why he treats me the way he does. He doesn't seem a bit afraid of me turning on him."

"You have tried to pull his leg, and he wouldn't have it, is that so?"

"Yes, that's so."

"You then threatened him, and he laughed at you?"

"That's about the size of it. I'm sorry I went into the thing."

I expected to make a lot more out of him, but the scheme hasn't worked."

The other man chuckled.

"Well, never mind," he said. "Let us try and get that money-box ourselves, and maybe your share of what's in it will make you feel better."

"Maybe it will and maybe it won't. The box might hold only a paper which would be of no use to any one but Sleek."

"That's all right. We'll sell it to him for the best price we can get."

"We'll have a time of it driving a bargain with him. He's as sleek as his name. He's more of a crook than he is a minister. I don't take any stock in that Hottentot society he makes such a bluff about. It's just a confidence game to bleed people with."

"That's my idea. The woods are full of people who are living by their wits."

"And most of them would make more money by doing an honest day's work."

"You're right there. Sleek is a shrewd and capable man. I'll bet he could earn ten thousand a year getting business for some large concern. Big business is looking for just such men—they are needed. But he isn't built that way. He'd rather work the public in his own way. Well, he certainly worked Banker Hazel in great shape."

The two men, having finished their talk, left the card-room, went to the bar and took a drink, and then left the saloon.

Harry followed them out and let them go their way.

He had learned something, but whether it would be of any use to him he could not say.

He figured from what the clerk had let out that there was a flaw of some kind in the deed of gift.

What the flaw was, and how far it affected the legality of the document, it was not possible for him to guess.

He must talk the matter over with Mr. Prescott in the morning.

And so, thinking over what he had heard, he went home.

CHAPTER XII.

HARRY MAKES HIS THIRD COUP IN THE STOCK MARKET.

Next morning he told the old cashier what he had overheard at the interview between the lawyer's clerk and Lawyer Simpson, his employer, in the card-room at the back of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth street saloon.

"The lawyer is evidently no better than he ought to be," said the old man. "No respectable legal gentleman would hold such an interview with his clerk, whose talk proves him to be a rascal; nor would a reputable lawyer do business with a man of Mr. Sleek's stamp after he came to know him as well as this lawyer appears to know the reverend gentleman."

"That's right," nodded Harry. "The whole bunch is tarred with the same brush. Birds of a feather, so to speak. It wouldn't surprise me to learn that my father was the victim of a put-up job. I'll bet Mr. Sleek wouldn't have turned over this banking business to me if he was sure he could have stood me off in case I brought the case into court."

"I've always looked at it in that light," said Mr. Prescott. "I distrusted that missionary from the day he came here and announced that your dead father had turned over everything he possessed to him in trust for his society. He showed me the deed of gift, however, and though your father's signature was hardly recognizable, still it was witnessed by what I took to be a competent person—the clerk of the lawyer who drew it up. But now that clerk appears to be a rascal, and the lawyer himself of doubtful respectability. It is a grave question in my mind whether the document is a genuine expression of your late father's wishes. His signature might even have been forged, or what is more probable, forced from him by compulsion. At any rate, it doesn't look at all like his writing."

"You have hit the truth, I guess," said Harry. "The lawyer's clerk, whose name I think is Spencer, told his employer last night that he had Mr. Sleek under his thumb, but that the legal gentleman did not appear to be afraid of him. From that I take it that both of them are equally guilty of some shady transaction—probably the deed of gift—and that neither dare expose the other."

"Yes. The more we delve into the matter the worse it looks. I think you ought to call on a first-class lawyer and lay the case before him with the view of instituting legal proceedings against Mr. Sleek for the recovery of the balance of your father's property, which is greater than the value of this business."

"Your suggestion is worthy of consideration. You must re-

member, however, that I signed off my rights in Lawyer Simpson's office, and in attacking the genuineness of the deed of gift the burden of proving it a fraud will rest with me."

"I know. But you can subpoena Clerk Spencer as a witness, and on the stand a clever lawyer should be able to make him admit damaging statements if he is guilty of collaborating with Mr. Sleek in a criminal transaction."

"In accounting for the unfamiliar look of my father's signature, Mr. Sleek will assert that he was dying at the time and barely able to write, and Spencer will naturally back him up. I can't attack Spencer's character unless I have evidence to back up my statement. Even if I could show that Mr. Sleek was a fake missionary, and that the society of which he is the alleged head has no existence in fact, I could not shake his grip on my father's property. I must prove fraud, and with that end in view I must wait till I see what the detective agency can discover."

The old cashier agreed with him, and the interview came to an end.

Harry was very careful after that when he went out nights, for he was afraid another attempt would be made by the conspirators to get him.

He took the money-box from the safe twice with the intention of knocking it apart, but each time the sentimental interest he felt in it deterred him.

He figured that he could do it any time, and that whatever important thing the box contained was at his disposal, and there was no chance of Mr. Sleek getting possession of it.

During this time S. & T. took an upward jump, going to 90 in a few days.

There it stopped for nearly a week, and then it got another upward move on.

This time it kept steadily on, and at the end of two weeks reached par, and at that figure Harry sold out, realizing a profit of \$15,000.

He now had close to \$30,000 tucked away in his safe deposit box which the old cashier was ignorant of.

"I guess it is time to surprise him," thought the young banker. "That additional capital will make my business pretty solid. He will be tickled to death over my success in the market, but just the same he won't approve of me continuing to take chances. In fact, unless I get hold of another real good tip, I will keep out of the speculative field. One bad deal could easily clean me out of all I have made if I went in as deep as I have been doing."

At five o'clock that afternoon Harry called the old cashier in to his room.

"I have a confession to make to you, Mr. Prescott," he said with a smile.

"A confession!" ejaculated the old man, looking benignly upon his protegee.

"Yes. I have done something in a business way which I have concealed from you."

"Well, well, it's nothing serious, I guess."

"No, but it might have been. Had my first deal turned out wrong I might have lost \$2,500 of my small capital, and then you would have said things to me."

"I could hardly scold you for losing your own money, serious as such a thing might have been to the bank."

"Not if I had lost the money in the stock market?"

The old cashier frowned.

"Did you put \$2,500 into stocks?" he asked, anxiously.

"I did."

"And how did you come out?"

"I cleared \$5,000."

The old man's face cleared.

"You were fortunate," he said. "But you took a great risk."

"I heard that copper was going up, and I raised the \$2,500 on my St. Paul securities. I bought Idaho Copper at \$5 and sold it at \$15. After redeeming my stock I was \$5,000 ahead."

"And you never told me?"

"No, because I intended to try again."

"Did you make another deal?"

"I did, later."

"And this time you lost?"

"No. I made \$7,500."

"Is it possible?"

"The day I was abducted I went into my third and last deal," continued the young banker. "I got a tip from a broker I know, and bought 1,000 S. & T."

"You risked \$10,000 on it?"

"I did, and I have just sold out at the top of the market."

"You won again?"

"I figure my profit this time at \$15,000. That gives me \$27,500 independent of my capital in the bank."

"My gracious!"

"Now I have about decided to quit."

"You are sensible, and I congratulate you."

"I shall turn the money over to the bank as additional capital, and that will enable us to extend our operations."

"Good!" cried the old man. "You are a smart boy, and I am proud of you. How pleased your father would be if it were possible for him to know of your success."

"As success, like charity, covereth a multitude of shortcomings, I guess you have no fault to find with me now."

"None at all. I should not have approved of your ventures, but since they are things of the past, and have been successful, of course I have no fault to find with you. I am delighted to hear you say you are through, for it is much easier to lose money in stocks than to win it. You have been exceptionally fortunate, but you could hardly hope to keep it up. Many a man has won a fortune in the market, and then lost it again. It is a pure gamble, and the conservative people in Wall Street keep clear of it. If a suspicion ever got out among your customers that you were dealing in stocks, there would be a run on the bank and your business would be ruined."

Harry was glad to get this matter off his mind.

He apologized to the old gentleman for going into a speculation which he would not approve of, and Mr. Prescott told him that was all right.

The result delighted him, he said, and he saw no reason why his protegee should not some day become a big banker.

"This money will enable you to fight Mr. Sleek for your rights," he said. "When one goes to law he needs the sinews of war at his back."

Harry nodded.

"You haven't pulled the money-box to pieces yet," said the cashier. "Why don't you?"

The young banker explained why he had hesitated.

"Your reasons are all right in their way, but I think under the circumstances you ought to put sentiment aside. Unless Mr. Sleek is under a misapprehension, you will find something of importance."

"I have sounded the box all over for a false bottom and false sides, but there is no indication that such exists. In fact, I am willing to swear that the box is not different from any other money-box. I don't believe there is any mystery about it. In my opinion Mr. Sleek is on a false scent."

Harry shut down his desk, and he and the old man left the bank.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN THE TOILS AGAIN.

A few days afterward Harry got his first report from the detective agency.

He was informed that Lawyer Simpson had no great standing in the legal fraternity, and was suspected of having had a hand in several shady transactions.

He did a considerable business in the police courts defending crooks, and furnishing them with bail.

The second part of the report dealt with the law clerk, Spencer, whose first name was Richard.

He had been shadowed, and it was found that he patronized sporting resorts of a low grade frequented by many persons whose reputations would not stand the glare of a searchlight.

He enjoyed an extensive acquaintance with these individuals, but the regular police had nothing particular against him.

The report said that he was being followed up, and the agency hoped to be able to furnish further information concerning him.

The third paragraph dealt with Mr. Sleek.

The agency had ascertained that the Hottentot society he claimed affiliation with did not exist.

Mr. Sleek was simply a grafter whose peculiar talents enabled him to pose with success as a clergyman.

So far as the agency could learn he had been in New York but six months, and had at first made a business of soliciting contributions for the Hottentots.

At present he was doing nothing in a business way, and had not since he came in possession of the Hazel property.

In conclusion, the report said that the agency was trying to get a line on his career before he came to the city.

That was all, and Harry felt that as far as it went it was quite satisfactory.

He handed it to the old gentleman to read.

"Just what I thought," nodded the cashier. "Follow the

matter up and you'll get back the rest of your father's property."

"I hope so," said Harry, "but I have a foxy lot to deal with."

"That can't be helped. One thing I would warn you of, and that is—don't let Mr. Sleek sell the house. He'll do it at a sacrifice if he gets wind of the efforts you are making against him. Once he turns everything into cash he'll disappear, and it won't be easy to find him. He might go to Europe."

Next day Harry called at the detective agency and saw the chief again.

He said he was willing to pay the expense of placing the reverend gentleman under constant watch to prevent him from selling the house.

"Very well," replied the chief, "I will have him shadowed right along."

Next day Harry visited all the real estate offices in that part of Harlem, and left word that if the house was offered for sale he should be immediately notified.

The agents, believing he had an idea of buying the house, promised to advise him if the place was put on their books.

When he got back to the office he found a letter there from Mr. Sleek, inviting him to eat Christmas dinner with him.

"What do you think of that?" he said, showing the letter to Mr. Prescott.

"You will decline the invitation, of course?" said the cashier.

"Sure. I am not going to walk into a trap, as it probably is."

So he wrote Mr. Sleek that a previous engagement prevented him accepting his kind invitation, and mailed it right away.

He would have turned down the invitation anyway, because he had arranged to dine with the cashier on Christmas.

Mr. Prescott lived out in a modest little house in Flatbush, and thither Harry took his way early Christmas afternoon.

The old gentleman was a widower, and lived with his married daughter and her husband, but he owned the house himself.

He had also several thousand dollars deposited in a couple of savings banks, and was regarded as the master of the house.

Harry spent a jovial Christmas with the family, and remained until close to midnight, when he set out to catch a car for the bridge.

There was a flurry of snow in the air.

Just enough fell to whiten the ground and give a real Christmas appearance to the night.

Harry was putting his best foot forward, when at the corner of the second block he was suddenly set upon by three young men and knocked out just as on the previous occasion.

Then a shrill whistle brought up a cab without lights, the young banker was loaded into it, the men clambered aboard, and the vehicle was driven away.

Once more Harry's enemies had him in their power.

When the young banker recovered consciousness he found himself lying on a cot with his arms bound to his side.

It didn't take him long to understand that he had fallen a victim to those persistent individuals who were after the money-box.

He wondered where he had been carried to this time.

It was still night, apparently, for the room was dark.

He attempted to rise, and then he found that he was also tied to the cot.

"The rascals are making sure this time that I won't be able to make my escape from them," thought Harry. "With detectives watching them, as I supposed, I did not dream they would be able to make another move against me. And now they have me in their power again. This is hard luck."

There was nothing Harry could do except make an effort to free his arms, and this met with failure.

Considerable time passed, at least it seemed long to the young banker, and still there was no sign of daylight coming.

Then he heard sounds of footsteps overhead.

In a few minutes he heard a door open somewhere around, and he saw a flash of light upon the bare rafters.

Somebody was coming, and though he knew it was an enemy, he welcomed any change in the situation.

As the light flashed around Harry saw that the walls were composed of stone and were windowless, so he judged that he was confined in a cellar.

Then he saw the figure of a man advancing with a lantern in his hand.

He was the same party who had visited him in the "Black Boy" hotel in Hoboken.

Harry felt pretty sure that it was Spencer, the lawyer's clerk, in disguise.

As a matter of fact, it was.

The newcomer looked down at his prisoner and grinned.

"You see we've got you again," he said.

"I see you have," replied the boy. "You must have followed me out to Flatbush and then lay in wait for me."

"That's what we did. You're a nifty chap to make such a get-away from the top floor room in Hoboken. If those blankets had given way that would have been the last of you. It is clear that you have got to be watched pretty closely to hold on to you. I don't think you'll get away this time before coming to an agreement with me."

"You can't make an arrangement with me about the turning over of that money-box, not if you keep me here for a year and a day," said Harry.

"I have something different to propose to you."

"I don't care to listen to you."

"This idea will be to your advantage."

"In what way?" asked Harry, curious to learn what the young man was driving at now.

"You haven't learned the secret of the box?"

"Not yet, but I dare say I can any time I choose."

"You take the matter easy."

"I can afford to. I have the box. Mr. Sleek, in whose interests you are working, will never have a chance at it. You can tell him that."

"I am not working for Mr. Sleek now."

"Then you admit that previously you have been?"

"Well, as there is no witness to this interview, I'll admit it."

"He wants the box."

"I guess you know that."

"And you were at the back of the previous attempts made to get it?"

"I was. I got the people to do the jobs, all of which failed."

"I thought so. Now tell me who you are."

"I'd rather not until we come to a definite understanding and I have your guarantee not to prosecute me for anything I have done."

"I hardly think you'll get such a guarantee from me."

"I think I will when I show you it will be to your interest to stand in with me."

"Stand in with you, eh? Then you are thinking of going back on Mr. Sleek?"

"I believe I can make more out of you."

"You are frank about it."

"Yes. I see money in being so with you."

"What is your proposition?"

"Ten thousand dollars cash and your promise not to proceed against me or my partner."

"Who is your partner?"

"Never mind. We'll leave him out of the case. He won't appear in it. The business will be transacted by me. I merely mentioned him because you might suspect his identity, and I am bound in that case to protect him. It is part of the agreement I have with him. He is to get half of the money."

"Go on."

"Will you agree to that arrangement?"

"I hardly think I will, but if I did, what am I to get for the expenditure of \$10,000, which is a large amount of money?"

"Fifty thousand in property."

"I see. You refer to my late father's property, which Mr. Sleek obtained through that deed of gift—the proportion he retained after turning the banking business over to me as a sop to prevent me making trouble for him?"

"I do."

"I fail to see how you can influence the matter in any way."

"I can do it," said the visitor, in a confident tone. "The \$50,000 includes the secret of the money-box."

"As I intend to pull the box to pieces when I get back to my office, I guess if it holds a secret I will learn it without any assistance from you."

"You can pull the box to pieces, but the chances are you won't learn anything."

"Why not? If I can't learn the mystery, how can you or Mr. Sleek discover it if you had the box?"

"Because we know the secret."

"You must be pretty close to Mr. Sleek."

"I have been, but I intend to cut him out by doing business with you direct."

"How can you do business with me in relation to my father's property when Mr. Sleek controls it through the deed of gift?"

"Because his control of it depends on me."

"You have said enough, my friend," said Harry. "I have been weighing your words carefully, and the conclusion I have reached agrees with my previous ideas on the subject."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that I can see through a millstone when there's a

hole in it. The deed of gift, as I have always suspected, is a fraud. My father's signature was either obtained from him by intimidation, as he lay dying, or it was forged after his death. Its validity in law rested wholly on the credibility of the man who witnessed it. That man was you."

"Me!" cried the visitor, starting back.

"Yes. You are Richard Spencer."

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUSION.

"How do you know I am Richard Spencer?" asked the young man, after a pause.

"Because Richard Spencer is the only one who can prove that the deed of gift is not a genuine expression of my father's wishes."

"That doesn't prove I am Spencer."

"You just said that Mr. Sleek's control of the property covered by the deed of gift depends on you. That shows you are Spencer. And your statement further shows that you know my father's signature was not honestly obtained. If it was honestly got you couldn't deprive Mr. Sleek of a dollar's worth of the property. You see I am wide awake to the situation."

"Well, will you agree to my proposition if I come over to your side and show that the paper is fraudulent—that the signature was not honestly obtained to it? Will you pay me \$10,000 to recover the property now held by Mr. Sleek, and if I show you how to get \$10,000 more through the money-box? Will you?" said the visitor, eagerly.

"Was my father's signature forged?" asked Harry.

"You can't trap me into any admission until you agree to my terms."

"And suppose I refuse your terms?"

"Only a fool would do that. You'll gain \$40,000."

"And by doing so maybe I'll compromise a felony, which is against the law."

"How?"

"If my father's signature was forged you are a party to it. Your proposition requires me to protect you. I don't believe I could protect you if I was willing to. The moment you give Mr. Sleek away he will be open to arrest. If arrested he will naturally turn on you. He won't take the whole guilt on his own shoulders. At any rate, he will try to get back at you, and then you will be arrested. Then how will I be able to save you?"

"I'm not worrying about what Sleek will do to me. The moment I get my share of the \$10,000 I'll skip the town."

"And your partner?"

"Sleek can't touch him, because he had nothing to do with the paper except—"

"Draw it up, to Mr. Sleek's order."

"I didn't say that."

"I know you didn't, but I am fully informed of the identity of this partner of yours. He is your employer, Mr. Simpson."

Spencer uttered an ejaculation.

"What makes you think he is?" he said.

"Perhaps you think I've been asleep all this time, Mr. Spencer? I have found out a lot about Lawyer Simpson, and you, too. I have learned where you spend your nights, and the kind of company you keep. I have also learned that Mr. Sleek is not a missionary, and that his Hottentot society does not exist. You are not dealing with a foolish boy in tackling me, though I have to admit you have caught me off my guard, and so have got me in your power. But you won't be able to hold on to me long, I tell you that right now. The moment I am missed you will be arrested on sight, and then you'll be put through the Third Degree. In a word, Mr. Spencer, almost every move you make is being watched, and it was only by a lucky fluke that you carried out your plans to-night. So you see there is no need for me to make any bargain with you involving \$10,000 or any other sum."

Spencer uttered an imprecation.

"Are you telling the truth?" he said.

"I am. I have had you under observation for the last two weeks, for I was satisfied you were Mr. Sleek's right bower. Mr. Sleek is also being watched. If he tried to leave the city he would be arrested. So you see I've got you both in a net, from which you can't escape."

"Have me arrested. You can't prove anything against me."

"Don't be too sure of that. I have a lot of evidence against you, with more to come, for one of the smartest detectives in New York is on the case."

"You are only bluffing."

"All right. The proof of the pudding is in the eating."

Harry saw that Spencer was working under the front he was putting up.

"Give me \$10,000 and I'll tell you with a statement that will pull you through."

"How about Mr. Simpson?"

"Never mind him. Let him go bag."

"I see. You will give him the slip just as you mean to treat Mr. Sleek."

"What do you care?"

"Nothing."

"Do you agree?"

At that moment there came the sounds of feet overhead.

Spencer started and looked apprehensively over his shoulder.

Harry saw that he was startled by the sounds.

"What's troubling you, Mr. Spencer?" he asked, sarcastically.

"No matter," said the lawyer's clerk, rushing toward the end of the cellar, leaving the lantern behind him.

His object was to make his escape, for after what the young banker had told him, he scented detectives on his trail.

And he was not wrong.

He and his pals had been followed to Flatbush by a sleuth who witnessed the capture of Harry.

Unable to save the boy single-handed, he had clung behind the cab, and was carried to the lone house where the boy was imprisoned.

Taking note of the place, he made his way to a drugstore and communicated with Brooklyn police headquarters.

Several officers were sent to meet him, and he guided them to the house, which they entered.

Spencer was nabbed as soon as he came out of the cellar.

Then he admitted that the young banker was a prisoner below, and Harry was speedily released.

Spencer was taken to headquarters and locked up, and Harry went home in the gray of the morning.

Next day the lawyer's clerk was taken to New York.

On the promise of a light sentence if he made a full confession, he declared that the deed of gift secured by Sleek was a forgery.

On the strength of it Sleek was arrested.

He denied the accusation, but was held for trial.

Two days later he was found dead in his cell, the victim of a virulent poison, and he left a signed statement admitting everything, but accusing Spencer as his aider and abettor.

Spencer sent for Harry and offered to sell him the secret of the money-box.

Harry had in the meanwhile pulled the box to pieces, but failed to unravel the mystery.

"How much do you want for the information?"

"A thousand dollars," said Spencer.

"Is the secret worth that to me?"

"It's worth \$10,000."

"If it's worth that I'll give you the money."

"I'll take your word. You have pulled the box to pieces?"

"Yes."

"And you found nothing?" he said, with a grin.

"I admit it."

"I told you you wouldn't. You have the pieces?"

"Yes."

"The secret is in the cover. It is curved. Underneath the center, inside, a piece of tin has been carefully soldered. Tear that away carefully and you will find what is hidden there."

"What is hidden there?"

"Look and see."

Harry hurried back to his bank and followed directions.

When the false piece of tin was removed, out popped thirty fine diamonds and rubies.

They were subsequently valued at about \$8,000.

Spencer got his money, and two years in Sing Sing.

Harry recovered all his father's property, which was worth about \$10,000.

He and the old cashier held a jollification over the result.

And so with the unraveling of the mystery of the money-box we close the story of the young banker.

Next week's issue will contain "THE SECRET CHART; OR, THE GOLDEN TREASURE OF THE CRATER."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

A bath given to a statue of Circe, in the home of Miss Florence Mathews, of Norwalk, Conn., by Mrs. Ellen McIlhony, a servant, in November, 1912, proves to have been an expensive one. A jury assessed damages of \$950 in favor of Mrs. McIlhony recently. Circe fell on Mrs. McIlhony, injuring her.

Webster Groves, a suburban town west of St. Louis, which never has had a saloon since its incorporation, voted to remain dry. The vote was 99 to 227. For seventeen years saloons have been kept out by the prohibitory license—\$5,000 a year. Recently rumors were circulated that a saloon man, backed by St. Louis brewers, would pay the required license and open a saloon in Webster Grove. A local-option campaign then was organized.

Thirty-five hundred of the 7,000 employees of the Alexander Smith Carpet Company, in Yonkers, N. Y., have received a bonus of \$80,000. This is the sixth bonus the employees have received in three years, making a total of \$420,000 that has been divided among the men and women workers. This last bonus came as a surprise, as the wages of the employees were cut ten per cent in January. Employees who have been with the company ten years got 10 per cent of their wages for the past six months and those working five years got 5 per cent.

A giant coyote, desperate with hunger, attacked Mrs. J. J. Sizemore as she was returning to her ranch home near Kemmerer, Wyo. Mrs. Sizemore ran into the house and the coyote followed. The woman's young son seized a rifle and attempted to shoot the animal, but a shepherd dog had grappled with it and young Sizemore was afraid he would shoot the dog. Finally the brute was driven off and as he darted from the house an elder son came up and shot the coyote. The animal was one of the largest ever seen in this section.

The new King of Albania has provided himself with a finely wrought shirt of mail, flexible almost as silk, and made of steel links of the hardest temper. This is intended to be worn under his uniform on public occasions for he has been warned that a price has already been placed upon his head by the revolutionaries. The latest news from Rurazzo describes conditions there as quiet, although auspicious but elaborate precautions are being taken by every one to save the new King from becoming the victim of some hired desperado. The Albanian tongue includes no word signifying love, but many for revenge, which is said to be the dominant note of the national character.

The principal wars of 1912 were fought in the Balkan States, China and the civil strife in Mexico. The total losses amount to 240,000 killed and wounded, and

may be unofficially stated as follows: Balkans, 161,527; Mexico, 22,417; China, 9,279; Tripoli, 1,854; Morocco, 1,649; Philippines, 257; Africa, 966; Arabia, 62; Persia, 50. The total number compares with 322,000 in 1912, 72,000 in 1911, 13,000 in 1910, 668,000 in 1909, and 22,000 in 1908. In the two wars in the Balkans, Bulgaria lost 44,892. Of this number, 30,024 were killed in a war of the Allies with Turkey and 14,868 in the war between Bulgaria and the Servians and Greeks. There were 104,586 Bulgarians wounded in the two wars.

Marjorie Wale, sixteen-year-old junior tennis champion, of San Francisco, who won the first tennis tournament she ever entered in, is touted soon to be the national woman tennis champion. Although she has only been playing three years, she can give all her girl opponents big handicaps. Miss Wale devotes much time to tennis, and is probably the most observing player that visits the coast courts. When a championship match is on she is watching closely, and already has acquired the power to hit the ball with such speed that the ordinary woman player finds it hard to return her shots. She has mastered all the strokes, but her most valuable one is the drive. Her serving scores many points, while she is equally good in the back court and at the net. Her ground strokes are perfect, and she smashes exceptionally well. She twice played in the San Francisco championship woman's tourney and carried off trophies each time. Miss Wale is a great lover of sports other than tennis. She has won medals for running, is an excellent swimmer and basket-ball player, while she also is an enthusiastic baseball fan.

"Hail Columbia," the song which stirs the blood of all Americans, was produced almost impromptu, for a special occasion. A young man named Fox, attached to a theater in Philadelphia, Pa., chiefly as a singer, was about to have a benefit. At that time (1798) there was a prospect of war between the United States and France, and Fox, anxious to produce some novelty at this benefit, thought out the scheme of singing an original song that should arouse the national spirit. He applied to several poetical friends, but they failed to produce anything of a satisfactory nature. The benefit was to take place on Monday, and on the previous Saturday afternoon Fox called on Joseph Hopkinson (who had known him from a school-boy), and, explaining his dilemma, asked him to write a song adapted to the popular air of "The President's March." Hopkinson consented and wrote the imperishable "Hail Columbia." It was received by the audience with the wildest applause, and the singer was encored again and again. The words were sent all over the country as quickly as the limited resources of the press could conduct them, and aroused the greatest enthusiasm whenever or wherever heard. Joseph Hopkinson, author, was a son of Francis Hopkinson, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

CHEEK AND CHANCE

—OR—

TRAVELING ON HIS WITS

By ED. KING

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XVI (continued)

He was at the end of expedients, however, for Smith now made a dash towards him. In one hand was a slung-shot. Nellie gave a wild scream.

The street was dark and lonely. The other artists of the troupe had not yet come out.

"Run in, Nellie," called Andy, quickly. "You can find help inside."

The young girl needed no second bidding. Fear lent wings to her feet. She vanished in the stage entrance of the theater.

Andy faced his foe. He knew that Smith was more than a match for him. But he dodged, keeping out of reach of the slung-shot.

But Smith had the advantage and forced him back to a corner by the stage door. With a howl of exultation he rushed upon him.

The slung-shot was uplifted, and that moment might have been Andy's last. But at that moment a loud voice roared:

"Avast there! Bear off, for here's rescue from the Caroline Jones!"

A powerful arm flung Smith back to the edge of the sidewalk. He gave a hissing cry, dropping his slung-shot, and fled. Andy, pale and trembling, faced his rescuer. In the gloom he could not see his face, but something in his voice as well as the words gave him a thrill.

"What did you say?" he cried. "Did you speak the name of the Caroline Jones? You have saved my life. Are you one of her crew?"

Andy's rescuer stood strangely still with averted face.

"I reckon I came in time," he said. "Yes, I was once one of the crew of that vessel, and—I need not say more—I recognized you as another."

"Recognized me in this darkness?" began Andy.

"No, in that theater. I sat in the pit and not far from this villain who has just tried to kill you."

Andy gave a great cry and pulled his rescuer into the glare of the theater entrance lamp.

"Jason Bent!" he cried.

"Sh!" protested the ex-convict, for he it was. "I am a hunted man. Don't call my name in public places."

"Forgive me!" cried Andy. "Oh, Jason, you have saved my life! I owe you for that. But where have you been, and what are you doing? I have much to tell you. We must have a talk——"

Jason gripped Andy's arm.

"Go easy," he said. "We will have a talk. I know where to find you. But I am in great danger, and I must come to you secretly. I will visit you at your room in the hotel in half an hour from now."

"I will be there," said Andy. "Do not fail me."

"I will not."

Then Jason was gone. By this time Nellie, with members of the troupe and attaches of the theater, had come running out. But Andy met her with a smile.

"We will go back to the hotel in a cab, Nellie," he said.

"All danger is over. I had a protector."

Explanations were made to the others, and then Nellie and Andy entered a cab. Andy said when they were seated:

"I told you I had a protector."

"I am curious," said Nellie.

"You have heard me speak of Jason Bent?"

"Yes."

"He was the one who saved my life. Smith meant to kill me. Well, Jason is coming to see me in half an hour. I will tell you more then."

The matron of the troupe was at the hotel and took charge of Nellie. Andy at once went to his room. A short while later, there came a light tap on the door.

It opened, and Jason stepped across the threshold. In an instant he was embraced by Andy.

"Oh, it seems good to see you," cried the young outcast.

Jason trembled, and his eyes filled with tears. He seemed strangely affected.

"I know that you mean that," he said, "and you are the only person in the world who would say that to Jason Bent. I am a fugitive from the law, that most unfortunate of creatures, a hunted man, and you are the only one who wishes me well."

"Indeed, I do wish you well," cried Andy. "Why should I not?"

"And you don't believe me a murderer?"

"You could not murder!"

"Right, my lad. I have been a bad egg, but that worst of crimes was never rightly charged to me. I killed that man in self-defence. Justifiable homicide, I swear it before heaven. But they won't give me a chance. I want to live a better life."

"There ought to be a place in the world somewhere for you."

"Right, boy, and there is. I mean to find it. I had given you up, but seeing you in the theater to-night I was bound to see you once more. You are prospering?"

"I think I can say so," replied Andy.

"Good! And the smart little miss who plays with you——"

"Is Nellie Spencer, of whom I have told you."

"A real romance," said Jason. "Well, happiness is yours. I only wish I were free to once more join hands with you on the stage. We would succeed."

"Indeed we would," agreed Andy.

"What became your lot after the night of the robbery at Selectman Davis? Tell me all."

"Sit down!" said Andy, "and I will tell you a strange story."

With this Andy recapitulated his experiences with Dr. Markham. He did not show the will or betray the hiding place of the gold, however.

Jason listened in a strangely interested manner.

CHAPTER XVII.

A STRANGE RECOGNITION.

Jason paid strict heed to Andy's story. At times he seemed the victim of singular emotions.

When Andy concluded, he arose and paced the room a few moments. His face was very pale.

"So the old doctor is dead?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Andy. "Were you acquainted with him?"

"Well, yes," replied Jason, in a thick voice. "I knew him well—very well."

"Then you were acquainted with a very kind-hearted man," declared Andy.

"You are right," agreed Jason. "He was a kind-hearted man. His friends were many and his good deeds legion. So he clung to the delusion that his lost boy would some time be found and claim his father's name and heritage?"

"Yes," replied Andy. "And it is my life mission to accomplish that end."

Jason turned sharply.

"Are you in earnest in that purpose?" he asked.

"Certainly," replied Andy.

"You are an honest boy. But—only think, the chances are the heir may not be alive, or at least not found. You are one hundred and fifty thousand better off to keep it quiet and take the whole sum——"

"Excuse me, Jason," said Andy, with firmness. "Such a hint is lost on me. I have not even the faintest idea of doing such a thing. I shall claim the third which the dying man awarded me. The rest will go to his son, if he can be found."

Jason looked keenly at Andy a moment. Then he laughed in a singular manner.

"Well, the chances seem good against his ever being found," he said. "But that is neither here nor there. You say the money is buried?"

"Yes."

"You had better get it into a bank the quickest possible way."

"I shall do so."

"Is it a safe operation?"

"I shall make it so."

"But this rascal, Smith, who is pursuing you with such murderous intent, what are his claims?"

"He claims to be the legal heir?"

"He is an impostor."

"Of course."

Jason stroked his mustache.

"But you must be ever on your guard," he declared.

"He is a bad man. Oh, Andy, if my life was not so darkly clouded I could help you greatly. I can and intend to do so now, but it must be in secret and in the dark."

"Then you will help me?" asked Andy, eagerly.

"Of course I will."

"Good for you, Jason. Look here! I have an idea. In a disguise you would never be known, and especially in a stage make-up. Join our company."

Jason's eyes flashed.

"Would it be safe?"

"I think so."

For a moment the unfortunate ex-convict was all animation. Then his face fell and he became morose again.

"No," he said, "it wouldn't be safe. There are sleuth-hounds all around me. I must keep in the dark awhile longer, but don't fear. When you need a friend or assistance I will be near at hand."

With this Jason opened the door and went out. Until a late hour that night Andy was sleepless and deeply buried in thought.

His sympathies were powerfully with Jason Bent. It seemed to him a pity that a career so rarely gifted should be stifled and cut short by a crime of which he was, no doubt, innocent.

The day came for the New York Burlesque and Variety Company to leave Augusta. Trunks were on the station platform, and the manager was busy seeing the special car fitted up for their occupancy.

It was intended to strike Portland next. Just as they boarded the train, an urchin thrust a bit of paper into Andy's hand.

He held it up and read, penciled in a fine hand:

"DEAR ANDY:

"I am coming right along after you. I am the shadow of that villain, Darius Smith. He is following you, and I am following him, and for aught I know detectives are following me. Quite a race, eh? Who will win? I shall see that Smith loses. The rest shall be left to heaven's good will. Do not fear that harm will befall you. Yours,

"U—No—Hoo."

Andy crumpled the note up, and entered the car with a lighter heart. So he was yet pursued by Darius Smith? It was well to be so kindly forewarned.

The train pulled out for Portland. The run was not a long one, and in due time the Forest City was safely reached. The troupe put up at the famous Preble Hotel. Here occurred an incident which made quite a change in the career of Jason Bent.

The New York company was to play four nights in Portland. The first night Andy kept a sharp lookout for Jason. But he did not appear.

The second night Andy saw Darius Smith in the audience. The villain glowered at him, but Andy was not in the least disconcerted.

(To be continued)

FACTS WORTH READING

ATE POISONOUS BEAN.

Samuel Dwokin, a student in a school of pharmacy at Sixty-eighth street and Broadway, New York City, obtained possession of a jequirity bean the other afternoon at the conclusion of a lecture in which it was pointed out that one four-hundredths of a grain from the bean was fatal. He swallowed it. He was taken violently ill last night shortly before midnight and was removed to Harlem Hospital, where he is in a serious condition.

At the lecture a specimen of the jequirity bean was passed around the class. It was pointed out that one four-hundredth part of the substance of the bean, which was about five-eighths of an inch long, would produce death ordinarily. The bean comes from India and is used for making Indian licorice and for general medicinal purposes.

YELLOWSTONE PARK.

Almost 2,000 more people visited the Yellowstone Park in 1913 than during the season of 1912, according to the report of the superintendent, recently made to Secretary Lane. The tourist travel has increased 45 per cent. since 1906 and was heavier in 1913 than ever before, with the exception of 1909, when the Lewis and Clark exposition was held in Portland. The most important work during the year was that in connection with the improvement of the existing system of roads.

"The work on the west entrance road," says the superintendent, "gives a partially improved road to the belt line junction, ten miles south of Norris Geyser basin. Contracts for two bridges on the west road have been let, and bridges will be in place at the beginning of the next tourist season. With a continuance of present appropriation the entire west entrance road will be widened to twenty-five feet by the end of the 1914 working season, but the improvement of the road will not be finished until several years later.

"The winter conditions for wild game were again excellent. With plenty of grass and the snow remaining soft so they could paw through it to get food, the elk, deer, antelope and mountain sheep wintered well and with but little loss. During December, January, February and March 538 elk were captured in the park near the northern entrance and shipped for stocking public parks and ranges. The cost of capture and loading on board the cars at Gardiner was \$5 per head, which was paid by the states and parks receiving the elk. The loss in capturing and up to the time of delivery at their destination was but twenty-two animals out of 538 shipped."

QUEER HAPPENINGS.

James Dundan, eighteen, arrested for robbing a department store of \$1,000 in goods, says he began by stealing scented soap for his "best girl."

Bay Ridge discovers that burglars are taking advantage of the servants' "Thursday afternoon out." On that day scores of thefts; total loss, \$10,000.

Dr. Henry Cotton's fee of \$25 for determining when each electrocuted murderer in New Jersey is legally dead has been cut out by State Comptroller.

Thomas Lynch, deserting tuberculosis sanitarium, Berkeley Heights, N. J., because he could not stand "fresh-air treatment," run over and killed by train.

Whale, weighing 1,200 pounds, stranded at Long Beach, L. I., found to contain baby whale weighing 52 pounds.

Gustav Liff, No. 275 Eighteenth street, Brooklyn, accidentally killed by gas, with pet dog he had kept ten years in compliance with promise to dying wife.

No money in teaching tango, according to bankrupt Florette Amusement Company, Inc., No. 250 West Forty-second street, which lost \$4,000 in ten days.

William McDonald, Yonkers, arrested for driving a horse which humane officer says has been condemned to death six times.

Road Commissioner James Haring and his wife, Rockland County, N. Y., wear gloves they were married in, fifty years ago, at golden wedding.

Cat knocks alarm clock on floor, rousing Mr. and Mrs. George Palmer, Rockland Lake, N. Y., saving them and three children from death by gas.

Thirty days in jail to let his love cool, is sentence imposed at Katonah, N. Y., on flirt who kissed Edith Shellhouse.

James Vogel, whose suit case, containing twelve pairs of corsets, was stolen in Worthington depot on Putnam Railroad, asks their return, as no thief needs so many.

Burglar carrying \$150 in jewelry and silverware in pasteboard box, leaving home of Chester Gower, Mahopac, N. Y., slips, breaks box, gets scared, leaves loot.

Mrs. Louise Wendt, Larchmont, N. Y., put in her will \$100 for J. D. Rockefeller; clerks thought it a joke until they learned this Rockefeller is a servant.

Henry Bruner, Central Valley, N. Y., fights in court for his right to bathe every day, winter and summer, in Cromwell Lake; water company objects.

Samuel A. Crane, Jr., twenty-one, kills himself with gas in Newark, leaving note saying he could not get rid of the cigarette habit.

Jury in Judge Morschauser's court brings in verdict for \$32,000 for Timothy McAuliffe, Cornwall, N. Y., who lost two legs on railroad.

Curfew bells and whistles for Patchogue, L. I., in winter. Children under ten off streets at 7 P. M., under eighteen at 8 P. M.

Eagle Blue Father, full-blooded Indian, whose Broadway name is Ezekiel Gosman, arrested for fighting on street car over a wet nickel.

Ghost seen; Policemen Brown and McGill, Paterson, N. J., investigate and catch man who has escaped from hospital wearing only white night-shirt.

Talking with members of family, and laughing, Mrs. Barbara G. Herrschaft, sixty-three, Clifton, N. J., suddenly expires.

TEN-DAY ISLAND

OR,

THE SECRET OF OLD 33

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER VI (Continued).

"The Seven Brothers, from Buenos Ayres, bound for Cadiz, Spain."

"It is so! You are my grandson indeed!" murmured Old 33, and he stretched out his arms, threw them around John Jacks, as we shall still continue to call the boy, and pressed him to his heart.

But it was only for a moment.

"Enough of this," the old man said then. "My time is short, and what I have to say must be quickly said. First, the questions. John, is your father alive?"

"Dead now five years," replied the boy, tears coming into his eyes.

"Don't stop to tell me how he died. It does not matter," said Mr. St. John. "I shall soon be with him. Were there any children besides yourself?"

"None, sir."

"Your Uncle George—does he still live?"

"No, he is dead. He died just a year after my father."

"And the property—who inherited it? It was fifty thousand dollars in good New York real estate."

"Fifty thousand dollars! Why, it amounts to more than a million now!" cried John Jacks.

"Ah! Is it so? See what time has done. But why are you here? Why are you not the millionaire?"

"I wandered down here looking for work," replied the boy. "After my father's death I went to live with Uncle George. He had the property under your will."

"Under my will!" cried the old man. "Never! My son George was a scoundrel. I cut him off without a dollar. The property was left to your father, boy!"

"So my father always declared. But the will was found to read just the other way. My father took the property. He treated my father very badly all his life. We were poor and he was rich, but he severely reprimanded us. When I was thirteen years old he took me to work in his office in Wall street. He accused me of stealing—accused me untruly. I was arrested and sent to Blackwell's Island. When I came out my uncle was dead, and my cousin George, now at the head of the business, would not recognize me. He kicked me out of his office, and said: 'Oh, it is all too sad a story. It is terrible for you. Oh, he is dying! What shall I do?'"

Suddenly the old man gave a quick gasp and fell back on the lounge. His eyes closed and his breathing seemed to cease, but when John Jacks got another glass of the

whisky down his throat, he revived, and for a little time lay there breathing hard.

Then suddenly he straightened up into a sitting position, and made a queer inarticulate noise, pointing to his tongue and shaking his head.

Paralysis had seized him. He could no longer speak. John Jacks saw that he was going fast.

Then suddenly he made a motion with his hands which seemed to indicate that he wished to write.

"Can't you speak, grandfather?" asked the frightened boy.

The dying man shook his head, and made the motion again.

"You want to write?"

"Yes."

It was the last word he ever uttered, and that came only with the greatest difficulty from his half paralyzed tongue.

John Jacks opened several drawers in an old bureau which stood in one corner, and at last found paper and a pencil.

Then he gave to his grandfather, still sitting beside him on the lounge, held him up while he wrote with wonderful rapidity, but in such a small, crabbled hand that as John Jacks sat he could not read a word.

When the sheet was covered, until at last he seemed to be exhausted, and, throwing aside the pencil, he folded up the paper and handed it to John Jacks.

At the same instant the dog outside set up a furious barking.

Old 33 raised his hand, pointed toward the door, and with a strong gurgling sound sank back into John Jacks's arms.

"He's dying! Oh, he's dying!" gasped John Jacks, for he saw that the eyes were closing.

"Wake up, Joe!"

Joe started up, crying out:

"What's the matter, Johnny?" and at the same moment Susie Tyson came hurrying down from the loft above.

"They are coming, John Jacks!" she cried.

"I know it! Oh, Susie! Oh, he's dead! He's dead!"

"It can't be helped!" cried the girl. "He's old and you two are young, and don't want to go back to Wareton jail. Don't think about me, either. They won't trouble me. I know Colonel Gayton too well. But first to make

Lights were seen flashing behind the house, and the dog was barking like mad.

"Yes, they are coming, all right!" cried Susie, closing the door. "This way, boys! You haven't a second to lose!"

CHAPTER VII.

INTO THE CHIMNEY.

John Jacks and Joe were rather puzzled to know what Susie Tyson meant when she threw open the door of a little cupboard high up on the side of the chimney, and exclaimed:

"In there, boys! Crawl in there!"

"In there? What can we do in there?" cried John Jacks. "My goodness! It will hardly hold my big head!"

"Yes, it will, and if you will only butt your big head against the back of the cupboard you will find out what I'm driving at all right," was Susie's reply.

"But I hate to desert him," said John Jacks, looking at his grandfather. "It is a shame to leave him to fall into old Gayton's hands!"

"You can do him no good. Don't you see he is dead? Oh, do be quick, boys; they are right here!"

John Jacks jumped up, caught hold of the edge of the cupboard, and, crawling in, pressed his head against the back as he was told.

Then the back flew back, and John Jacks crawled into the chimney, which had been built for this very purpose.

There were steps in the chimney. The flue was a very narrow one, and lay crowded away over to one side, all the rest of the chimney being taken up with the steps, which led down into a secret sub-cellar, a large square vault bricked up in the sand.

John Jacks had a lantern which Susie had given him, and he was flashing it about when Joe came down the steps with his mouth wide open and his eyes staring.

"Good! This is where they keep 'em, eh?" he exclaimed. "Ha, ha! I allus knowed the old man had a place like this somewhere, but he wouldn't never tell me where it was."

It was the old smuggler's storehouse, of course.

There were boxes and bales scattered all about; some of the boxes contained brandy, and there were many full of cigars. Evidently Susie did a very good business in her own way.

John Jacks wondered who her partners were, but that was something he never found out.

In one corner of the vault was an iron door secured by a heavy bar.

John Jacks lowered the bar and opened the door.

There was a tunnel behind it. The tunnel led back on the ridge a little way, where there were steps leading up to a trap-door, which was carefully concealed under a heap of stones.

The boys went as far as the steps, and then returned to wait for Susie to give them word that the coast was clear.

While they were waiting John Jacks sat down on one of the boxes and tried to think.

Should he tell Joe what had happened while he lay by the fire asleep?

He could see no reason why he should. Joe knew nothing of his history; he had not heard of the treasure. Why should he know anything about it until the right time came?

John Jacks believed in the treasure now.

Listening, he could hear no sound in the room above him, and yet he knew that their pursuers must be there.

"Keep close to the stairs, Joe, and listen," said John Jacks. "I want to read something Old 33 wrote for me just before he died."

He took out the paper and read it through from beginning to end, his eyes opening as he proceeded.

"Well!" he murmured, as he folded it up and put it in his pocket. "This beats everything! Can it be true? If it is, there will be somebody rather surprised if I ever get back to New York! I wonder if it can be true? Why, it means millions for me all right."

It was all John Jacks could do to contain himself, he was so excited.

He sat kicking his heels against the box, thinking fast.

"Some one is coming, Johnny!" exclaimed Joe, in a hurried whisper.

"I hear!" replied John Jacks. "It's Susie, I think. Yes! She's calling."

"You can come up, boys! It's all right now!"

The boys hurried up the secret stairs, and were in the room again in a moment.

"They've gone," said Susie. "I hope you don't think any the worse of me for telling lies, for I've had to tell some whoppers. Colonel Gayton and his gang were here, and I've sent them away down into the swamp looking for you. They may come back again. It wouldn't surprise me if they did. I wanted to tell you, and now I think you had better get back into the vault and stay there the rest of the night."

"I think so, too," said John Jacks. "How can I ever thank you enough for what you have done?"

"By keeping your mouth shut about the secrets of my house, will be the best way I know of, and by getting away from here just as soon as it is daylight. I can't keep you. They are coming back after the old man's body in the morning, and if you are found here it will make trouble for us all."

"We'll be on the move, don't you fear," replied John Jacks. "But they shan't have the body. Joe and I will bury the old man right now."

"And get me into trouble? No!" cried Susie. "It must be left right where it is. What matter, so long as he's dead?"

Sure enough, what did it matter after all?

Yet John Jacks would have given much to bury his grandfather decently. He hated the thought of his remains being dragged back to the prison, where so much of his long life had been spent.

"Wait a moment. I don't want to spend the night in that hole," he said, going to the door and looking out.

(To be continued)

FROM ALL POINTS

The worst hurricane experienced in fifty years has devastated Cook Island and Aitutaki Island, in the archipelago south of the Society Islands. In the course of the storm a huge wave swept over Mauko Island, in the same group, destroying an entire village. The condition of the inhabitants of the storm-stricken islands is pitiable.

In 1913 the total number of strokes of lightning causing damage was 6,344. The number of buildings wholly or partially destroyed was 6,643. The number of persons killed or injured aggregated 1,625. The value of property destroyed, \$4,000,000. Father Jupiter seems to care less for human beings than he does for cows, sheep and horses, for of these his bolts killed only some 4,000.

An investigation by Congress may follow charges made by A. B. Callahan, of Juneau, Alaska, that six thousand salmon-cannery employees along the Alaskan coast virtually are slaves under a peonage system. These employees include whites, but are chiefly Japanese, Chinese and Filipinos shipped to Alaska each spring from San Francisco, Portland and Puget Sound ports. They are said to receive little or nothing at the end of the six months' canning season.

A fight with a coon which imperiled the life of J. L. Radford, a farmer, took place three miles south of Paris, Tenn. Radford was painfully hurt. While walking around his farm Radford passed through a strip of woods. He noticed a hollow in a tree and climbed to examine it. He found it inhabited by an immense coon. He descended, and with his penknife sharpened two sticks and reascended the tree. His perch was a perilous one, and he was forced to cling on with one hand. He struck the coon with one of the sticks, and the animal at once returned the attack, fighting viciously. Radford was unable to descend. He finally barred the hole, and holding the sticks across the opening with his teeth and one hand, he opened his penknife to use as a weapon. The coon badly tore Radford's hand, but he finally succeeded in killing the animal.

O. S. Dorman, of Rome, N. Y., aged ninety-nine, one of the oldest active men in the State, is planning to go to Liberty, Mo., to visit his cousin, Henry Dorman, aged 115, said to be the oldest man in the United States. Mr. Dorman of this city, who enjoys excellent health, says there is no reason why he cannot easily make the trip and return without lessening his physical ability. Mr. Dorman of Missouri has been bedridden for five years at the home of his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Hattie Dorman, aged seventy. For five years he has been fed with a spoon twice a day and been washed and bathed by his daughter-in-law, who calls him her baby. But the baby must have a semi-weekly shave. A spark of life in a wornout body; dim, inert eyes; mumbling, toothless jaws; an uncut shock of wispy white

hair straggling over a bulging forehead, seared with cross furrows; deep-set eyes; a neck infinitely wrinkled and drawn over gnarled muscles—such is Henry Dorman as he peers from over the edge of a checked quilt. According to the family Bible he was born January 16, 1799, in Steuben County, N. Y. The first half century of his life was spent in New York State. His age is further authenticated by the papers recording his enlistment in the Seventh Michigan Cavalry. Born almost a year before the death of George Washington, he has accordingly lived in three centuries, and is perhaps the only man alive in this country—or perhaps elsewhere—who can authenticate that claim. He was born in the administration of John Adams and was a grown youth when Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo.

William Kidd, executed as a pirate and murderer on May 24, 1701, was a native of Scotland, and was born about 1650. In his youth he entered the merchant service, and distinguished himself as a privateersman against the French in the West Indies. He was very active against the pirates that infested the waters near New York, in the early days, out of which port he sailed. The assembly of the province recognized his services by presenting him, in 1691, with \$750. In 1695 a company for the suppression of piracy by privateering was organized in England. Among the shareholders in this enterprise were King William III, the Earl of Bellomont—after governor of Massachusetts and New York—Robert Livingston, of New York, and a number of other wealthy men. The agreement was, that one-tenth of the booty gained by his privateering was to be given to the king, and the remainder divided among the other shareholders. The ship selected for the purpose was called the Adventure Galley, and Captain Kidd was made her captain and admitted as a shareholder. In the latter part of July, 1696, she sailed from New York for Madagascar, the chief rendezvous of the pirates who swarmed in the East Indian seas. A year or two later the company was surprised to learn that Kidd had turned pirate, and orders were given to arrest him, wherever found. In the spring of 1699 he reached the West Indies in a vessel loaded with treasure. He left this in a bay, off the coast of Hayti, in charge of his first officer and a part of the crew, and with forty men sailed northward on a sloop and entered Long Island Sound. At Oyster Bay he took a lawyer named Emmot on board, and sailing to Rhode Island, dispatched the lawyer to Bellomont, then residing at Boston as governor of Massachusetts, to find out how he would receive the alleged pirate. Kidd buried some of the treasure he had brought on the sloop on Gardiner's Island, off the eastern end of Long Island. Bellomont's answer must have seemed favorable, for Kidd went to Boston. Nevertheless, he found that he had been deceived, for he was immediately arrested, sent to England, tried for murder and piracy, found guilty and executed on the date given above.

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BRIEF BUT POINTED ITEMS

In a duel between a cormorant and a lobster in Dublin, the latter was a victor. The cormorant dived into the water and rose with the lobster in its beak. Suddenly the cormorant began flapping its wings violently and struggled with the lobster until it became exhausted and fell dead on the beach. It was found that the lobster had gripped the cormorant's tongue, and the bird died of suffocation.

Edward Corton, who has demonstrated scientific poultry picking at several New England poultry shows, established a record at the Derry, N. H., show that will be hard to beat. He killed and picked four birds in $2\frac{3}{4}$ minutes and, according to the timers, picked one of them in 20 seconds. This may seem incredible to the farmer who has spent an hour in killing and picking one fowl, but it is scientific methods that count in these days.

I. T. Cooper and Charles L. Terry, the latter a well-known fruit expert, will install 2,000 stoves in the peach orchards on the Cooper farm, near Dover, Del., where they have 10,000 trees. The stoves, which are known as smudge fires and for which crude oil will be used as fuel, will protect the year's crop from the March and April frosts. Frost damages the blossoms when the sun's rays suddenly strike it. The fires send up a light heat and keep the blossoms alive. The fires are kept burning until the sun is well toward the zenith.

Doctor William C. Bartrum, of St. Luke's Hospital, Newburgh, N. Y., died at his home in that city recently from blood poisoning, resulting from a prick of his finger with a needle while engaged in an operation at the hospital Thanksgiving Day. He was 34 years of age. He was graduated from the Columbia Medical School in 1904, and later took a course in the medical school of the University of Vienna. Doctor Bartrum realized from the first the danger that attended his case and took every precaution to prevent the spread of the poison.

Rear Admiral Vreeland, the officer of the General Board of the Navy, ranking next to Admiral Dewey, has filed with the House Committee on Naval Affairs a statement of

the relative values of gun and torpedo fire of the German and American fleets as they stand to-day. "Because of lack of knowledge of Germany's future armaments," says the statement, "it is impossible to furnish comparative data on ships building or authorized." The Vreeland statement shows that in total muzzle energy of one broadside the dreadnoughts of the German Navy to-day are twice as strong—in the aggregate—as the American dreadnoughts. Entering into this calculation are eight American dreadnoughts and seventeen German dreadnoughts. In the pre-dreadnought ships the United States has a heavier total muzzle energy of guns than has Germany. But combining both the dreadnoughts and the pre-dreadnoughts, the total muzzle energy of the guns of the German fleet is stronger than that of the American fleet by a preponderance of 11 to 8. After receiving these figures a majority of the members of the House committee assented to the contention of American Navy officers that the United States Navy should now be properly classed in third place among the naval powers.

JOKES AND JESTS.

Maud—I'd hate to think that you'd throw yourself at Fred. Mamie—Why not? He's a good catch.

"How does it happen," inquired the stranger, "that all the improvements are being made in this one street?" "It doesn't happen at all, sir," replied the citizen who was showing him about the place, majestically. "This is the street I live in. I am chairman of the town council, sir."

Mr. Angler (opening basket)—Yes, dear, I had excellent luck to-day. I'll show them— Why—why, they're salt mackerel! Mrs. Angler (sweetly)—It's all right, dear. I told the grocer to send mackerel the next time for a change—you've caught so many fresh fish lately, you know."

Spikesy—Dis paper says, among some yacht racin' notes, dat "Mr. Barnacle entered the yacht Ragtime, an' got a \$500 silver cup." Jimmy the Rat—Dat's nuttin'. I entered a feller's yacht last week, an' got t'ree silver cups, a set of solid silver, two gold watches an' me pockets full of odds an' ends.

Wife—Never mind if you have failed, dear. I have fifteen hundred dollars saved up from the pin money that you have given me from time to time. Husband (joyfully)—You make me feel easier. What a help! Wife—Help! I should say so. Why, on this money I can keep up my wardrobe for a year to come.

Small Boy (significantly)—I heard you kiss sister in the hall last night. Young man—What's that, you little rascal? Small Boy (boldly)—I heard you kiss sister in the hall last night, that's what. Young Man—Well, here's a quarter; now you keep your mouth shut. Small Boy (outside)—Gee, wasn't that easy? And I was dead asleep in bed.

A RED TRAIL.

By Alexander Armstrong

As I stood beside the body of poor Hugh Armsley as he lay cold in the icy embrace of death while beside him knelt his wife and a fair-haired little girl, whom a cowardly assassin's bullet had made a widow and an orphan, I registered in my own mind a solemn oath to avenge my comrade's death by bringing his slayer to the gallows.

Hugh Armsley was a brother detective here in the city of New York, and years of fellowship and association in the detective business had begot a firm friendship between us.

Hugh and I had been for some time on the trail of Dan Sibley, a most skillful counterfeiter and the one time confederate of the notorious firm of "Doyle & Brockway," the counterfeiter of U. S. bonds, of whom everybody knows.

Hugh, single-handed and alone, had attempted the capture of the desperate Sibley in an all night dive in New York, but Sibley, who was known to have spent many years in the wilds of the Far West, was remarkably quick on "the draw," and, getting the drop on my detective "pard," he sent a leaden messenger of death through his heart, instantly killing one of the bravest and truest men I ever knew.

Firm in my purpose and true to the oath I had taken, I made the one grand and ever present object of my life to strike Dan Sibley's track.

At last I did strike his trail, and "a red trail" it proved.

Three months after the assassination of Hugh Armsley I knew to a positive certainty that "my man" was in Nevada.

He had been spotted at Pioche, and also at Gold Hill.

I was in Nevada immediately after receiving the intelligence from Frank Day, the great Western railway detective, who had years before been the associate of both myself and poor Hugh.

From Gold Hill I trailed Dan Sibley to the new mining claim of Rader's canyon (new in 18—, though old now).

The day after my arrival there I spotted my man.

I saw him in a saloon called the "Wild Wilderness," and with him was a smooth-faced fellow who bore the imprint of scoundrel upon every lineament of his sneaking visage as plainly as though the word had been indelibly stamped there by the hand of fate.

The very day I "spotted" him in the "Wild Wilderness" saloon I became convinced that he and his smooth-faced associate were plotting some crime.

Getting near the two, I caught these words which were uttered by Sibley:

"To-night at ten, Damond."

"All right, I'll be there," was the answer of the man whom Sibley called Damond.

I had never seen Damond before, and of course I was entirely unknown to him, and although I was cleverly disguised, of course there was less risk of detection in shadowing Damond, trusting that such a course would enable me to learn more of the business on foot between the villains.

I was not wrong in this supposition, and that night, after hours of close surveillance, my man Damond led me to a cabin at the end of the gulch.

The place was a dark and secluded pass, and the cabin was built against the mountain side.

Damond entered the cabin.

I crept to the door.

Scarcely had I reached it, when an awful cry of human agony burst upon the silence of the lonely gulch, and then all was still.

Intuitively I feared murder had been done within that solitary cabin, and I was about to dash forward and lend a helping hand to the poor imperiled one whose voice had reached my ears, when the door was dashed open and Dan Sibley and the man called Damond came out.

Between them they carried the body of a young man, whose attire served at once to convince me that he was a miner.

I sprang back unobserved into the shadow of a great boulder.

"Now, then, to make sure work with the body, and then to secure the papers. This night's work, if consummated properly, means a fortune for us both," said Sibley.

He dropped the feet of the body, and his companion deposited the head and shoulders of their victim upon the ground.

Then they drew their bowie knives, and started toward the very boulder behind which I crouched.

It was a moment of suspense and peril for me, but my trusty revolver was in my hand.

Dan Sibley was a young but by no means bad looking fellow, and his attire was fashionable, such as is worn only by the gamblers and "sports" of the mines.

As he came toward me, closely followed by his companion, I could not help thinking that nature had been lavish in her favors with this icy-hearted desperado.

They were almost upon me, and the glint of the gleaming blades clutched in their hands, reflected by the light of the moon, flashed in my eye, when suddenly from a thicket between two trees at my side a young and beautiful girl sprang up.

I drew back out of sight as a cry burst from the girl's lips.

The next moment Dan Sibley clutched her hand as she turned to flee, and his heavy hand fell upon her shoulder.

The knife had fallen from his hand.

Damond, his companion, was concealed by the thicket he had not yet passed.

"Mariam, you here!" exclaimed Sibley.

"Yes, I am here, Dan. Oh! have you killed him?" gasped the girl.

"Yes!" hissed Sibley. "And now I think I suspect the truth. You meant to warn him—you meant to thwart my plot and save his life."

"I did, I did! Oh, now I know that you are worse even than I suspected. I am a lost and wretched woman. Oh! why did I listen to your false vows of love; why did I leave my happy home in Omaha to follow the fortunes of a mur—"

"Hush, girl, or, by heavens, I strangle you!" thundered Sibley.

Shuddering, but without a word, the girl turned and

led away toward the camp, never once casting a glance behind her.

The assassins then raised the body of their victim, and hoisted him over the ledge, beyond which there was a fall of ten feet to the bed of a dry stream.

"Now to get the certificate of deposit, and in the morning we will draw his gold from the bank and be off," said Sibley.

He crept into the cabin and soon reappeared with a paper in his hand.

"I have it, I have it. At last George Darrell's fortune is ours. Come, Damond, we'll now return to the camp. This has been the greatest night's work I ever did, and I am well satisfied with it," said Sibley.

In a moment they were gone.

He crept to the edge of the cliff, over which they had thrown the body, I peered down into the darkness, and then began to climb down to the bed of the creek.

Reaching the bottom I paused to listen for a moment.

I stood motionless, and, to my ears, there presently came a groan.

I knelt beside the body, and as well as I could in the semi-gloom examined him.

Suddenly a bright light flashed in my face.

"It was the light from a dark lantern, and I found myself confronted by four men in dark masks, and four rifles were leveled at my heart."

It was a terrible surprise, but quick as the lightning's flash I drew my revolver and covered the foremost of the band.

"When I count three, five!" cried the foremost of the party, whose voice I recognized as that of Sibley.

"Hold!" I shouted. "Your men have the drop on me, but if you pronounce the word three, you will receive a bullet in your own heart, although I am riddled with bullets, for I've got a 'dead bead' on you, and I never miss my mark."

"That's so!" exclaimed the tough.

"Send your men away and retire with them. I know now who you are, but if you are road agents, as I suspect, let me assure you I have nothing worth robbing me of. I have just found the dead body of a friend of mine, and I mean to bury him here at once, that his remains may not be desecrated by the ravenous wolves," I went on.

"All right, pard. Go on with your funeral. We won't trouble you if you are out of dust. Come along, boys," said Sibley.

He and his gang turned away, and to himself I heard him mutter:

"This is as I want it. With our victim buried by one of his friends, the suspicion entertained by Damond that life might not have been extinct amounts to nothing, but I'm not sorry we came back when we met two of our confederates."

When the assassins were gone I set about the restoration of George Darrell. He was soon restored to consciousness. I then dressed his wounds, which were not serious, and before day I had him safely concealed in a cabin in the town.

The young man was a successful miner from California, and a new arrival at the camp who, but a few days before,

had deposited a large sum of money at the only bank in the place.

I was struck by the remarkable resemblance between him and his would-be assassin, and intuitively I suspected the real nature of the plot of which he had almost been made the victim.

Early that morning I was closeted with the bank officials.

Shortly after the opening of the bank my man, Dan Sibley, accompanied by Damond, entered it.

I was standing in a corner near the door of the president's private office.

Under the window were a couple of trusty men who had been recommended to me by the bank officials.

Sibley approached the cashier and presented the certificate of deposit he had stolen from George Darrell's cabin.

"I'd like to get the money on that, if you please," he said.

The cashier took the certificates and, looking up, asked: "Are you George Darrell?"

"Yes, sir," was the bold answer of the assassin, who relied upon his resemblance to the man he supposed he had murdered to carry out the deception.

"That's a lie!" I cried, wheeling and facing Dan Sibley.

"You are the liar. Are you drunk or a fool that you dispute my identity?" said Sibley, feeling for his revolver, while his companion did the same.

I never made a move "to pull."

I had my plans laid in advance.

"Let me remind you, Dan Sibley, and you, too, Damond," I said, quietly.

The pair of villains wheeled about and saw that the two men under the window, which was open, had quietly drawn a bead on them with their revolvers, which rested on the window-sill.

"Trapped!" cried Sibley, and then, turning on me, he said:

"In the fiend's name, who are you?"

"Waters, the detective; and I denounce you as the murderer of Hugh Armsley, of New York," I replied.

At the same moment the door of the bank president's private office was dashed open, and George Darrell appeared, as had been arranged that he should.

"And I denounce you as my attempted murderer! Villain, impostor, demon! I am George Darrell!" cried the young miner.

As the words escaped his lips, Dan Sibley and Damond made a dash for the door.

At the same time the two revolvers in the hands of the men, at the window rang out, and Damond fell, shot through the heart, while Sibley went down with a bullet in his leg.

I took Sibley back to New York, and he met his doom in the electric chair.

As for the girl whom I had seen at the cabin of Darrell, she proved to be Sibley's wife.

The casual had induced her to run away with him, but she was only too glad to return to her parents.

George Darrell took her home, and a year later she became his happy wife.

GOOD READING

Donning his fishing trousers, which he had not worn for weeks, Frank Tawks, junior, of Middletown, N. Y., put his hand into one of the pockets and was bitten on the finger by a mouse. He put his other hand into the other pocket and was bitten by another mouse. The mice had established homes for the winter in the pockets.

The gasoline-driven vehicle threatens to displace the horse in war as well as in peace. The armies of Europe are finding it increasingly difficult to secure enough horses for the artillery and cavalry, and are adapting the automobile to serve the need. The Greeks had found the horse enormously expensive in the Turkish war of 1897, and when the late war threatened they wisely purchased a hundred motor trucks for the transport and supply departments. These trucks, together with those already on hand, were sufficient to do one-half of the work of supplying the Greek armies during the war. When the war broke out certain consignments of horses had not yet arrived, and several batteries of field artillery were without horses.

Henry Coleman, of Sheepside, N. J., looking for his pet mule, Exile, found the animal perched in the top of a tree. "Now, how," said Farmer Coleman, "did that pesky mule shimmy way up there?" He was scratching his head when something hit him in the cheek. It was a bee. When other bees got busy Coleman ran for help. A glance told him that most of the bees were stinging Exile. With the aid of farm hands, Coleman pushed a top wagon under the tree. Exile was induced to drop, and thus was rescued. "Nothing could have made that critter climb a tree," said one of the hands. "He must have been hunting honey. When the bees got after him he jumped off the top of that bluff close by and landed in the trap-top. But it sure was a staggerer for a minute, wasn't it?"

The busy little bee is responsible for a new variety of Spokane country potato, according to Harvey K. Bradley, a rancher in the Kiesling district, Washington. The new tuber has been dubbed the "Bradley" potato in view of the fact that it was developed on his farm. "The potato is really a cross between the 'Burbank' and 'Million Dollar' varieties and is better than either," he says. "The origin was accidental. The credit must go to the bees which carried the pollen from the blossom of one and deposited it in the blossom of the other. The new potato is a good yielder, especially in heavy soil, and each one weighs from eight to twelve ounces. They are great keepers and will last until June of next year. I dug last year from ten to sixteen in a hill, and they make a mealy baked potato and boil well. I can plant them in May and dig them before the ground freezes."

Hog cholera in Iowa cost the farmers \$33,000,000 in 1913. Nearly 1,000,000 hogs died of the disease and ex-

perts say this is nearly 35 per cent. of the total number. The loss to Iowa farmers was two and a half times as great as during 1912, despite the efforts of the State and Federal Government to stamp out the disease. These estimates are based on reports from 1,120 men, covering every community in every county in the State, as compiled by Director W. J. Kennedy, of the State Agricultural College Extension Department. Dr. C. H. Strauger, director of the State Serum Laboratory, gathered statistics which show that when healthy hogs were treated the loss after treatment was less than 2 to 3 per cent. When sick hogs were treated the loss was between 16 and 17 per cent. But in many sections of the State serious results followed the use of good virus and poor serum. Experts say that provision must be made for the thorough testing of all serum, under either State or Federal authority, before it can be sold.

If we would be healthy, we must not only avoid drinking too much water, but we must also be careful not to take too many or too long breaths. This is the advice that comes from a group of Paris scientists who have been investigating the water-drinking and deep-breathing fads and find ground for believing them both harmful. The reason for attacking water drinking is that large quantities of water seem to permit certain bacteria to flourish abnormally in the intestines and thus encourage appendicitis and other troubles. Another theory is that excessive water drinking excludes milk, beer and light wines, which are known to retard the growth of microbes in the intestinal tract. Water seems such a harmless thing, and the idea of clearing the digestive tract and flushing the kidneys with it has been so popular that even the possibility of its doing harm is hard to believe. Yet water drinking is under the greatest suspicion, and so is deep breathing, which from time immemorial has been recommended as an aid to health. The breathing apparatus, say the doctors who are denouncing the deep breathing fad, is governed by a chemical regulator. The motor centers which give the impulse to our breathing muscles are very sensitive to the amount of carbonic acid gas in the blood. When this increases, the breathing becomes faster and deeper until the surplus of carbonic acid is discharged. Nature means to have the blood contain as near as possible a certain per cent. of the gas and shows great alertness in keeping it at that level. Nature has graciously given all animals, including man, a certain control of the breathing muscles, as it is necessary at certain times for the consciousness to be able to control the breath, as in diving or using the voice. It is claimed that it was never intended for an animal to use his own judgment and take deep breaths. The lungs will operate at their best efficiency if left entirely alone. What direct harm will result from deep breathing and the acquirement of large chest expansion is not yet proved, except that pneumonia is abnormally frequent among those who are addicted to this fad.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

NEW YORK'S FISH CONSUMPTION.

It is estimated that the fish consumption of New York City is one-quarter of a pound per capita daily. In other words, 1,250,000 pounds of fish is sold to the consumers of the largest city in the United States every day. In addition, New York fish dealers supply more interior points with a greater amount of sea food than any other city in the United States, while the variety to select from is the largest boasted by any city in the world.

NEW YORK'S BANKS.

Whether it is the building of a new railroad, requiring sums of money that run into the hundreds of millions, or the handling of an industrial, the signatures for big business are usually affixed in New York City.

This is the financial center of the United States, the point to which surplus money is sent by interior banks and the place to which men of affairs come when it is a question that involves borrowing sums that aid in pushing the country forward in its race for international industrial supremacy.

The banks of this city are the largest, not only in the United States, but among the greatest the world has ever known, and the men at the head of them are accounted the shrewdest and most ablest financiers of any time.

The total resources of 746 principal banking concerns in the State are \$4,134,163,563, while the total deposits are \$3,425,991,513.

EXPLORER PLANS A 600-MILE JOURNEY.

Gilbert H. Grosvenor, director and editor of the National Geographic Society, has just received a letter from Vilhjalmar Stefansson, the arctic explorer, whose steamer, the Karluk, is gripped in the ice of the Arctic Ocean, stating that he is planning the longest sled trip ever made—from Barrow, Alaska, to Prince Patrick Island, across the Canadian boundary line—practically 600 miles eastward.

When Stefansson's letter was written from the northernmost point in Alaska, he did not know what had become of the Karluk, or that the power schooner Mary Sachs, sought by him at Nome, had been crushed by the ice on the coast of Alaska in November. Stefansson's letter follows:

"You have, I suppose, seen a newspaper account of our fortunes, or misfortunes, rather. At the best, as it is, we have lost a year of time; at the worst the Karluk is gone, with half our equipment (the men are safe enough). I never looked on the expedition as a race; MacMillan may cover the region northwest of Prince Patrick Island ahead of us; Amundsen may catch up to us. There is still the main work to do for which we set out, and Karluk or no Karluk, we shall try to carry it out next year or some other year. I think I shall make for Prince Patrick Island on the Mary Sachs next spring, leaving the Karluk to follow if she gets free. I may even go by sled this winter to look the ground over. It will be the longest sled trip ever made if I do go, but it looks easy to me."

FOUND \$30 IN GOLD.

H. D. Fisher, of No. 5716 North Twenty-eighth avenue, Omaha, Neb., wanted a three-pound chicken for dinner and applied to his grocer, H. Alterson, who passed the order along to London's sanitary market, No. 2414 North Twenty-fourth street.

Out of all the big stock the market had only one chicken left. It weighed four and three-quarter pounds. The matter was referred to Mr. Fisher and finally, after much misgiving, he bought the rejected fowl for 78 cents.

When the chicken's gizzard was cut open in the Fisher kitchen there was a glitter of yellow, a metallic clink. Forty-one pieces of gold dropped out!

Mr. Fisher estimated its value at not less than \$30. The forty-one pieces ranged in size from tiny pellets to a strip half an inch long by three-sixteenths wide and slightly under one-sixteenth thick. Neither Mr. Fisher nor the proprietor of the market can trace the fowl. It came to the market with a lot of others from a local beef house. Apparently the gold was picked up in the sand, Mr. Fisher believes, but he has not yet started on a hunt for the gold mine.

It was some chicken, Mr. Fisher admits, and he has a nervous chill every time he thinks of how nearly he turned down the grocer's offer of a bigger chicken than he really wanted.

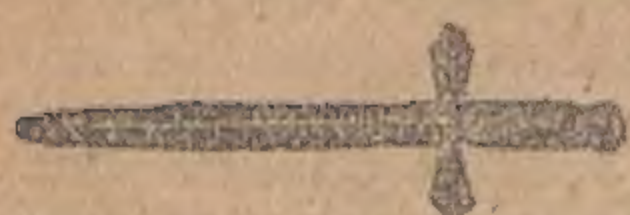
GLACIERS OF THE ALPS.

Some new measurements by the Swiss Alpine club confirm the continued recession of the Swiss glaciers. In spite of the bad weather of 1912 and in spite of the fact that some of the glaciers were protected by heavy snowfalls or have had hardly any sunshine, their liquefaction continues to proceed at an increasing rate.

The largest of the glaciers, L'Aletsch, has retreated ten feet, following on nearly sixty feet in 1911, and rather more in 1910. The Rhine glacier has gone back thirty-four feet in addition to the seventy feet lost in the previous two years. An exception to the general rule appears at first to be furnished by the two glaciers of Grindelwald, which have come on since last year, but the advance does not compensate for the loss of the previous year, and since 1893 the two glaciers have lost nearly a quarter of a mile. Their temporary advance is clearly attributable to the inclement weather of last year.

Nearly all the smaller glaciers, out of the fifty-two surveyed by the Alpine club, show some retreat, and the largest loss appears to be that of the Palu glacier, near Bernina, which is losing regularly seventy feet a year. Periods of recession of the Swiss glaciers have been noted before, and they have been followed by periods of advance, so that it has been suggested that the present instances are dependent merely on cycles of less rainy or snowy winters and that there is no permanent glacier loss.

THE MAGIC DAGGER.



A wonderful illusion. To all appearances it is an ordinary dagger which you can flourish around in your hand and suddenly state that you think you have lived long enough and had better commit suicide, at the same time plunging the dagger up to the hilt into your breast or side, or you can pretend to stab a friend or acquaintance. Of course your friend or yourself are not injured in the least, but the deception is perfect and will startle all who see it.

Price, 10c., or 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.



ELECTRIC PUSH BUTTON.—The base is made of maple, and the center piece of black walnut, the whole thing about 1 1/4 inches in diameter, with a metal hook on the back so that it may be slipped over edge of the vest pocket. Expose to view your New Electric Bell, when your friend will push the button expecting to hear it ring. As soon as he touches it, you will see some of the liveliest dancing you ever witnessed. The Electric Button is heavily charged and will give a smart shock when the button is pushed. Price 10c., by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE INK BLOT JOKER.



Fool Your Friends.—The greatest novelty of the age! Have a joke which makes everybody laugh. More fun than any other novelty that has been shown in years. Place it on a desk, tablecloth, or any piece of furniture, as shown in the above cut, near some valuable papers, or on fine wearing apparel. Watch the result! Oh, Gee! Price, 15c. each, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

CARD THROUGH THE HAT TRICK



With this trick you borrow a hat, and apparently shove a card up through the crown, without injuring the card or hat. The operation can be reversed, the performer seemingly pushing the card down through the crown into the hat again. It is a trick which will puzzle and interest the closest observer and detection is almost impossible. It is so simple that a child can learn how to perform it in a few minutes.

Price 10 cents each, by mail, post-paid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

ITCH POWDER.



Gee whiz! What fun you can have with this stuff. Moisten the tip of your finger, tap it on the contents of the box, and a little bit will stick. Then shake hands with your friend, or drop a speck down his back. In a minute he will feel as if he had the seven years' itch. It will make him scratch, rear, squirm and make faces. But it is perfectly harmless, as it is made from the seeds of wild roses. The horrible itch stops in a few minutes, or can be checked immediately by rubbing the spot with a wet cloth. While it is working, you will be apt to laugh your suspender buttons off. The best joke of all. Price 10 cents a box, by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

LITTLE CLINCHERS



With a pair of these creepers clinched on your shoes you can defy the slipperiest ice or snow. No matter how slippery the road or how steep the hill, these claws of steel will carry you safely over them. A child can adjust them in 30 seconds. No nails, straps, screws or rivets are needed. They will not injure your shoes. No need to remove them indoors—simply fold the heel-plate forward, reversing the spikes under the instep. They are comfortable, durable and invisible. Just the thing for postmen, golfers, hunters, woodsmen, brakemen, miners

and all who would insure life and limb in winter weather. 25 cents a pair, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

BLACK-EYE JOKE.



New and amusing joker. The victim is told to hold the tube close to his eye so as to exclude all light from the back, and then to remove the tube until pictures appear in the center. In trying to locate the pictures he will receive the finest black-eye you ever saw. We furnish a small box of blackening preparation with each tube, so the joke can be used indefinitely. Those not in the trick will be caught every time. Absolutely harmless. Price by mail 15c. each; 2 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE JOKER'S CIGAR.



The biggest sell of the season. A real cigar made of tobacco, but secreted in the center of cigar about one-half inch from end is a fountain of sparklets. The moment the fire reaches this fountain hundreds of sparks of fire burst forth in every direction, to the astonishment of the smoker. The fire is stage fire, and will not burn the skin or clothing. After the fireworks the victim can continue smoking the cigar to the end. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c; 1 dozen, 90c., mailed, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

BINGO.



It is a little metal box. It looks very innocent. But it is supplied with an ingenious mechanism which shoots off a harmless cap when it is opened. You can have more fun than a circus with this new trick. Place the BINGO in or under any article and it will go off when the article is opened or removed. It can be used as a funny joke by being placed in a purse, cigarette box or between the leaves of a magazine, also, under any movable article, such as a book, tray, dish, etc. The BINGO can also be used as a Burglar Alarm or as a Theft Preventer by being placed in a drawer, money till, under a door or window, or under any article that would be moved or disturbed should a theft be attempted. Price 15 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

TRICK PUZZLE PURSE.



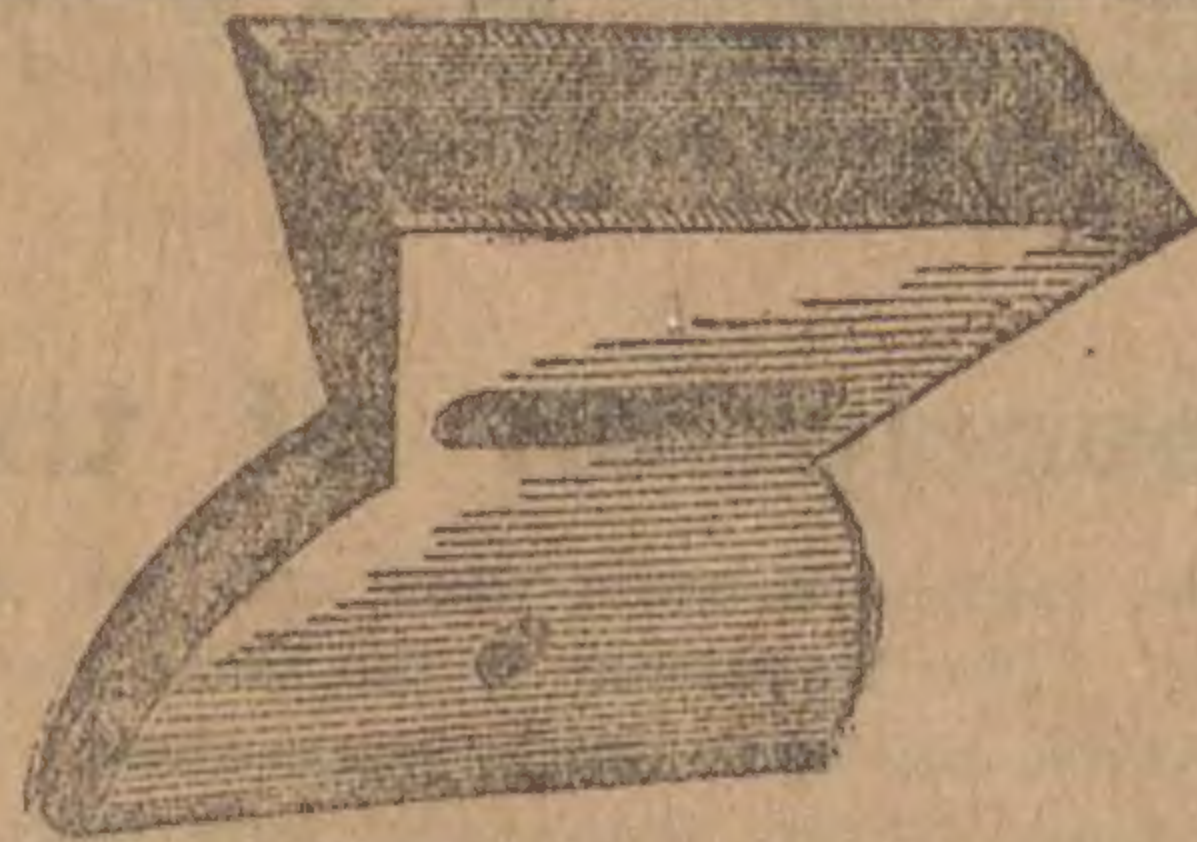
The first attempt usually made to open it, is to press down the little knob in the center of the purse, when a small needle runs out and stabs them in the finger, but does not open it. You can open it before their eyes and still they will be unable to open it. Price, 25c. each by mail, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

DUPLEX BICYCLE WHISTLE.



This is a double whistle, producing loud but very rich, harmonious sounds, entirely different from ordinary whistles. It is just the thing for bicyclists or sportsmen, its peculiar double and resonant tones at once attracting attention. It is an imported whistle, handsomely nickel plated, and will be found a very useful and handy pocket companion. Price, 16c.; 3 for 25c.; one dozen, 75c., sent by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



THE FLUTOPHONE.—A new musical instrument, producing the sweetest dulcet tones of the flute. The upper part of the instrument is placed in the mouth, the lips covering the openings in the centre. Then by blowing gently upon it you can play any tune desired as easily as whistling. But little practice is required to become a finished player. It is made entirely of metal, and will last a lifetime. We send full instructions with each instrument.

Price 8 cents, by mail, postpaid. A. A. WARFORD, 16 Hart St., B'klyn, N. Y.



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LOTS OF FUN FOR A DIME



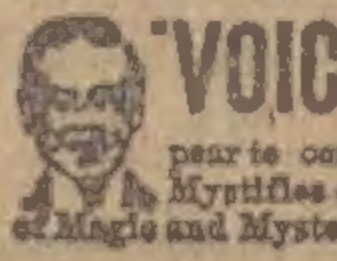
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JAPANESE TWIRLER. A wonderful imported paper novelty. By a simple manipulation of the wooden handles a number of beautiful figures can be produced. It takes on several combinations of magnificent colors. Price, 10c., postpaid. **WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.**

VANISHING CIGAR.



This cigar is made in exact imitation of a good one. It is held by a rubber cord which, with the attached safety pin, is fastened on the inside of the sleeve. When offered to a friend, as it is about to be taken, it will instantly disappear.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE JUMPING FROG.



This little novelty creates a world of laughter. Its chief attractiveness is that it takes a few seconds before leaping high in the air, so that when set, very innocently along side of an unsuspecting person, he is suddenly startled by the wonderful activity of this frog. Price, 15c. each by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

MANY TOOL KEY RING.



The wonder of the age. The greatest small tool in the world. In this little instrument you have in combination seven useful tools embracing Key Ring, Pencil Sharpener, Nail Cutter and Cleaner, Watch Opener, Cigar Clipper, Letter Opener and Screw Driver. It is not a toy, but a useful article, made of cutlery steel, tempered and highly nickled. Therefore will carry an edge the same as any piece of cutlery. As a useful tool, nothing has ever been offered to the public to equal it. Price, 15c., mailed, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE PEG JUMPER.



A very effective pocket trick, easily to be performed by any one. A miniature paddle is shown. Central holes are drilled through it. A wooden peg is inside of the upper hole. Showing now both sides of the paddle, the performer causes, by simply breathing upon it, the peg to leave the upper hole, and appear in the middle one. Then it jumps to the lower hole, back to the middle one, and lastly to the upper hole. Both sides of the paddle are repeatedly shown.

Price by mail, 15c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE FIGHTING ROOSTERS.



A full blooded pair of fighting game cocks. These Illiputian fighters have real feathers, yellow legs and fiery red combs, their movements when fighting are perfectly natural and lifelike, and the secret of their movements is known only to the operator, who can cause them to battle with each other as often and as long as desired. Independent of their fighting proclivities they make very pretty mantel ornaments. Price for the pair in a strong box, 10c.; 3 pairs for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

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NEW TEN-CENT FOUNTAIN PEN.



One of the most peculiar and mystifying pens on the market. It requires no ink. All you have to do is to dip it in water, and it will write for an indefinite period. The secret can only be learned by procuring one, and you can make it a source of both pleasure and amusement by claiming to your friends what it can do and then demonstrating the fact. Moreover, it is a good pen, fit for practical use, and will never leak ink into your pocket, as a defective fountain pen might do.

Price, 10c. each by mail.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

LIGHTNING TRICK BOX.



A startling and pleasing illusion! "The ways of the world are devious," says Matthew Arnold, but the ways of the Lightning Trick Box when properly handled are admitted to be puzzling and uncertain. You take off the lid and show your friends that it is full of nice candy. Replace the lid, when you can solemnly assure your friends that you can instantly empty the box in their presence without opening it; and taking off the lid again, sure enough the candy has disappeared. Or you can change the candy into a piece of money by following the directions sent with each box. This is the neatest and best cheap trick ever invented.

Price, only 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.

M. V. GALLIGAN, 419 W. 56th St., N. Y.

GOOD LUCK BANKS.



Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickled brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

EGGS OF PHARAOH'S SERPENTS.



A wonderful and startling novelty! "Pharaoh's Serpents" are produced from a small egg, no larger than a pea. Place one of them on a plate, touch fire to it with a common match, and instantly a large serpent, a yard or more in length, slowly uncoils itself from the burning egg. Each serpent assumes a different position. One will appear to be gliding over the ground, with head erect, as though spying danger; another will coil itself up, as if preparing for the fatal spring upon its victim, while another will stretch out lazily, apparently enjoying its usual noonday nap. Immediately after the egg stops burning, the serpent hardens, and may afterward be kept as an amusing curiosity. They are put up in wooden boxes, twelve eggs in a box. Price, 5c., 3 boxes for 20c.; 1 dozen boxes for 60c., sent by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

DEAD SHOT SQUIRT PISTOL.



If you shoot a man with this "gun" he will be too mad to accept the ancient excuse—"I didn't know it was loaded." It loads easily with a full charge of water, and taking aim, press the rubber bulb at the butt of the Pistol, when a small stream of water is squirted into his face. The best thing to do then is to pocket your gun and run. There are "loads of fun" in this wicked little joker, which looks like a real revolver, trigger, cock, chambers, barrel and all. Price only 10c.; 4 for 25c.; one dozen 60c. by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



Face



Back

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